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& PACIFIC  
**WEEKEND**  
EDITION

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Pole-sitter Marco Andretti would love to earn glory, break family's so-called curse in the Indy 500

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# STARS STRIPES®

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## CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

# Blazes bear down on neighborhoods



Tens of thousands ordered to leave, including some from Travis AFB

BY ANDREW FREEDMAN  
AND JASON SAMENOW  
*The Washington Post*

Wildfires touched off by a barrage of lightning strikes in central and northern California continue to expand.

The massive blazes are sending plumes of smoke and ash into the skies surrounding San Francisco, fouling air quality for hundreds of miles and endangering public health. Evacuations expanded overnight Wednesday into the early morning hours on Thursday, including portions of Travis Air Force Base, an Air Force logistics hub.

On Thursday morning, one grouping of fires had more than doubled in area since Wednesday, to 124,100 acres. The fast-spreading fire — known as the LNU Lightning Complex in Napa and Sonoma Counties — threatens 25,000 structures, according to Cal Fire, the state fire-fighting agency.

Late Wednesday, officials shut down Interstate 80 west of Vacaville, located southwest of San Francisco, as flames jumped the highway.

**SEE BLAZES ON PAGE 11**

**Firefighter David Widaman directs water onto a tree as a crew defends a house northwest of Santa Cruz, Calif., on Wednesday.**

SHMUEL THALER, THE SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL/AP

## DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

# DOD investigates 2 soldiers who appeared in uniform

BY STEVE BEYNON  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is investigating two junior enlisted soldiers who violated an Army regulation when they appeared in uniform during the Democratic National Convention broadcast Tuesday night, a Defense Department spokesman said.

During a roll call of all the states and territories pledging their conven-

tion delegates to former Vice President Joe Biden to formalize his nomination as the Democratic candidate for president, American Samoa used two Army Reserve specialists from the 9th Mission Support Command as a backdrop behind two delegates.

"Wearing a uniform to a partisan political event like this is prohibited," Lt. Col. Emanuel Ortiz, a Defense Department spokesman, said Wednesday

in a statement. "The Army follows the Department of Defense's longstanding and well-defined policy regarding political campaigns and elections to avoid the perception of DoD sponsorship, approval or endorsement of any political candidate, campaign or cause."

The two uniformed reservists' participation in the convention came after the Democratic Party's message to troops

**SEE SOLDIERS ON PAGE 10**

## RELATED

Harris accepts historic VP nomination  
**Page 10**



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

# BUSINESS/WEATHER

## EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel					
Germany	\$2.429	\$2.640	\$3.092	\$2.690	Azores	--	--	\$3.083	--
Change in price	No change	-0.1 cents	+0.3 cents	-0.1 cents	Change in price	--	--	+0.3 cents	--
Netherlands	--	\$3.087	\$3.912	\$3.683	Belgium	--	\$2.258	\$2.531	\$2.341
Change in price	--	+6.5 cents	+6.7 cents	+2.9 cents	Change in price	--	No change	No change	No change
U.K.	--	\$2.750	\$3.002	\$2.600	Turkey	--	\$2.893	\$2.401	\$1.156.00
Change in price	--	-0.1 cents	+0.3 cents	-0.1 cents	Change in price	--	--	+0.3 cents	-0.1 cents

## PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel					
Japan	--	\$2.899	--	\$2.489	South Korea	\$2.249	--	\$2.909	\$2.509
Change in price	--	-1.0 cents	--	No change	Change in price	No change	--	No change	No change
Okinawa	\$2.229	--	--	\$2.489	Guam	\$2.239**	\$2.649	\$2.909	--
Change in price	No change	--	--	No change	Change in price	No change	No change	-1.0 cents	--

\* Diesel EFD \*\* Midgrade  
For the week of Aug. 21-27

## EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates			
Euro costs (Aug. 21)	\$1.16	Switzerland (Franc)	0.9107
Dollar buys (Aug. 21)	60.8231	Thailand (Baht)	31.46
British pound (Aug. 21)	\$1.28	Turkey (Lira)	7.3414
Canada (Dollar)	103.00	(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)	
South Korean won (Aug. 21)	1,189.29		
Commercial rates			
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770		
British pound	\$1.3100		
Canada (Dollar)	1.3230		
China (Yuan)	6.9207		
Denmark (Krone)	6.2943		
Egypt (Pound)	15.9393		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1.1829/0.8454		
British pound	7.7505		
Hungary (Forint)	296.63		
Israel (Shekel)	3.4017		
Japan (Yen)	105.98		
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3059		
Poland (Zloty)	8.9830		
Philippines (Peso)	48.70		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.71		
Singapore (Dollar)	3.7504		
South Korea (Won)	1,189.29		

INTEREST RATES	
Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	0.25
30-day federal funds market rate	0.01
3-month Treasury bill	0.01
1-year Treasury bill	0.01
3-year bond	1.49

## INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	0.25
Federal funds market rate	0.09
3-month bill	0.10
30-year bond	1.41

## WEATHER OUTLOOK

### FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



### FRIDAY IN EUROPE



### SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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## MILITARY

## IG: General belittled staff, clashed with peers

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Maj. Gen. Dawn Dunlop, one of the Air Force's highest-ranking female fighter pilots, regularly belittled subordinates and clashed with peers before her removal as the leader of a Pentagon office responsible for some of the military's most secret programs, an Air Force inspector general probe found.

Investigators substantiated allegations that Dunlop publicly chastised and disrespected military and civilian workers during her time as director of the Defense Department's Special Access Programs Central Office, or SAPCO, which she ran from August 2018 until her firing in May 2019. Her actions created a toxic work environment, investigators wrote in the January 2020 investigation report obtained Wednesday by Stars and Stripes.

Witnesses said morale in the SAPCO office, which is charged with oversight of highly classified projects that require security and safeguards beyond the scope of typical secret information, dropped almost immediately after Dunlop's arrival and quickly rose after her removal on May 31, 2019. They told investigators the general routinely talked down to others and treated them like children she needed to parent. In at least one case, Dunlop called a subordinate's work "crap," and in another incident, a subordinate accused the general of angrily grabbing her hand without permission.

"In isolation, each of these instances may be viewed as Maj. Gen. Dunlop having an occasional bad day, having infrequent difficulties communicating her intent with her staff, or reacting badly in a her-stressed situation," the IG investigators wrote. "However, cumulatively, and given the totality of the facts and circumstances, the preponderance of evidence supports Maj.

**'I think she's a good fighter pilot. I think she's a good general officer. I think she lacked communications skills.'**

unnamed staff member  
U.S. Air Force investigation report

Gen. Dunlop engaged in a pattern of disrespectful behavior toward her staff ... in a way that was pervasive, personal, public and disproportional."

Through more than 30 years in the Air Force, Dunlop — who remains on active duty — has proven herself a trailblazing fighter pilot. She was the first woman to become a fighter test pilot and the first to fly the F-22 Raptor stealth fighter jet. In 2010, she became the Air Force's first woman to command a test wing.

But some witnesses said her leadership style did not mesh with her role at SAPCO. Dunlop told investigators she entered the Pentagon office intent on making changes to improve its work and to align it better with the vision of then-Defense Secretary Jim Mattis. She described her leadership style to them as "purpose-driven, data-driven, open, and very transparent."

Investigators found 21 of the 26 witnesses whom they interviewed during their probe held a negative opinion of Dunlop. They highlighted "weekly, sometimes daily" incidents in which she berated workers in Pentagon hallways over small mistakes or "just snapped" at a senior officer from another service during a meeting.

Other witnesses said they believed she meant well and might not have realized she was treating people poorly.



KENJI THULOW/US Air Force

**Maj. Gen. Dawn Dunlop, director of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Special Access Programs stands in front of an aircraft at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., last year.**

"I think she's a good fighter pilot. I think she's a good general officer," one unnamed staff member said. "I think she lacked communications skills."

Witnesses recalled Dunlop was preparing on Jan. 4, 2019, to meet a retired officer with a business proposal at the Pentagon for coffee. A female staff member, whose name was redacted from the IG report, advised the general that the retired officer would meet Dunlop in her office, catching her by surprise.

The staff member told investigators that she was looking down at Dunlop's schedule as the general was expressing dismay that the retired officer would see her office, which she said needed to be cleaned.

"And, as I did this, she, uh, took my hand and said ... 'Look at me, you know to get my attention,'" the staff member told investigators, describing Dunlop as "angry."

The staff member demonstrated the grab for investigators, the report states, telling them it was not "real tight," but she was "shocked" that Dunlop had grabbed her hand without

permission. Eyewitnesses corroborated the incident, and one reported it to Pentagon police about a week later.

"To be honest, I thought if that was a male general, he might have been done that day," one witness, whose name was redacted from the report, told investigators. "I did not think a male general would have survived that, if he had grabbed a 115 pound lady like that."

Dunlop never apologized for the incident and seemed to downplay it, investigators wrote, telling them she remembered it as "a light touch" that lasted at most about five seconds and was meant only to ensure the staff member was listening to her. She denied she was angry at the time.

"I think it was a very brief touch. I did not think much of it," Dunlop told investigators. "I thought it was an appropriate way to see if we were having a conversation or not."

The IG investigators shared their findings with the Air Force's criminal investigative service, the Office of Special Investigations, which declined to pursue

an assault charge.

Nonetheless, the IG found that incident "compromised her standing as an officer" and "constituted indecorum and conduct unbecoming an officer."

Dunlop, a 1988 graduate of the Air Force Academy in Colorado who has logged more than 3,500 hours flying fighter jets, defended many of her actions and leadership style as SAPCO's leader to IG investigators. She said workers in the office were not used to facing direct criticism of their work, which she argued needed improvement.

She said her intention was never to belittle her subordinates, especially in public.

"What I have found effective in my career, or what has worked for me, on me, is just the very direct: Here's what needs to be fixed, and here's why, and you go and fix it and you move on," she said in an IG interview. She added her style "might have been too much for them."

After her removal from SAPCO, Dunlop served about one year as a special assistant to the Air Force vice chief of staff. In May, she was named Air Force's director of operational capacity requirements.

An email seeking comment from a law firm representing Dunlop was not returned immediately Wednesday. Her attorney Gary Myers said in a statement to Air Force Times, which first reported the probe's findings, that Dunlop vowed to learn from the IG's conclusions.

Myers said the issues raised by witnesses grew out of Dunlop's desire to implement reforms in the SAPCO office and were not malicious.

"The IG allegations and report of investigation do not reflect who she is as a person, her values or her dedicated service of over 30 years," Myers' statement read.

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## Esper's jaunt to Hawaii, Palau, Guam may include Japan

By BETH ROBSON  
Stars and Stripes



LISA FERDINANDO/Department of Defense

**Secretary of Defense Mark Esper will visit several areas in the Pacific next week.**

Secretary of Defense Mark Esper will fly out next week for Hawaii, Palau and Guam, where he'll visit troops, meet with local leaders and attend events marking the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, his office announced Wednesday.

The secretary's exact itinerary is being withheld due to security concerns, Defense Department spokesman John Supple said in an email Thursday.

However, Japanese press reports said Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono would meet Esper on Guam, with China and North Korea expected to be high on their agenda.

A Japanese Defense Ministry spokesman on Thursday said nothing had been decided regarding a trip and that official schedules are usually released a day before travel.

High-dollar military construction projects on Hawaii, Palau and Guam are highlighted in "Regain the Advantage," a report on resource requirements prepared by Indo-Pacific Command leader Adm. Philip Davidson earlier this year.

For example, the report proposes spending \$185 million from fiscal years 2022-26 on a tactical, multi-mission, over-the-horizon radar in Palau that will provide long-range capability to detect and track air and surface targets.

A proposed Homeland Defense System-Guam that is forecast to cost just under \$1.7 billion for fiscal years 2021-26 would provide 360-degree air-missile defense, according to the report.

"In the future this system will provide the opportunity to provide long-range precision strike capability to the First Island Chain," the report states, referring to archipelagoes that stretch from the Kuril Islands north of Japan to Okinawa, Taiwan,

the northern Philippines and Borneo.

Homeland Defense Radar-Hawaii, also referenced in the report, would cost just over \$1 billion from fiscal years 2021-26 and fill a gap in the military's ability to detect, track, discriminate and defeat ballistic, cruise and hypersonic threats.

Kono and Esper, along with Australian Minister for Defense Linda Reynolds, had a virtual meeting July 7 where they talked about responding to the coronavirus pandemic and security issues in the East and South China seas, the Department of Defense said in a statement that day.

"With regard to the South China Sea, the ministers reinforced strong opposition to the use of force or coercion to alter the status quo and reaffirmed the importance of upholding freedom of navigation and overflight," the statement said.

Stars and Stripes reporter Hana Kusumoto contributed to this report.  
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## PACIFIC

# Bombers fly over Indian Ocean and Sea of Japan

By WYATT OLSON  
AND JAMES BOLINGER  
Stars and Stripes

Pacific Air Forces orchestrated simultaneous missions involving six bombers over a 24-hour period Tuesday, with some aircraft coordinating with the USS Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group near Japan at one point.

Two B-1 Lancer bombers departed from Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, to the Sea of Japan, where they linked up with the Japan Air Self-Defense Force, and the Air Force said in a statement Wednesday.

They were joined by another pair of B-1s that flew in from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

Meanwhile, two B-2 Spirit stealth bombers deployed to Naval Support Facility Diego Garcia flew on Tuesday to the Indian Ocean for joint tactical training, according to the statement, which did not specify the flights involved. The B-2s are home stationed at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.

"Our unique strength as an Air Force is our ability to generate integrated actions with our joint teammates, allies and partners to challenge competitors in a time and place of our choosing," Gen. Ken Wilsbach, who assumed command of Pacific Air Forces last month, said in the statement. "These simultaneous airpower missions demonstrate our capacity and readiness to deliver a wide range of proactive, scalable options to quickly deny our forces to support our mission of ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific theater."

During their flights, the B-1 bombers were joined by four F-15C Eagles from Kadena Air Base on Okinawa. Together, those aircraft rendezvoused with the USS Ronald Reagan strike group, F-35 Lightning II assigned to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, and F-15J fighters from the JASDF to conduct large-scale training in the Sea of Japan, which is also known as the East Sea.

The F-35B stealth fighter "provides a mobile sensor package to the whole team," said Lt. Col. Richard Behrmann, operations officer for Marine Aircraft Group 12, in response Wednesday to emailed questions to the Stars and Stripes.

Combined with aircraft from the Air Force, Navy and JASDF, the F-35 creates "a very strong capability," he said by email.

The F-35Bs provided escorts for the Lancasters and trained in counter-air defense with the other fighters, Behrmann said, according to the email.

"Staff members from each participating unit, including our Japanese allies, collaborated throughout the planning and execution phases of this event and continued to build upon our collective interoperability," according to the email.

Lt. Gen. Steven Rudder, commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, in the Marines' email, said U.S. strategic bombers "project strength and deter regional threats" in the Indo-Pacific region.

"Marine tactical aircraft," he said, "allows us to demonstrate the advantages created by our own unique capabilities and support these important assets."

Coordinating two operations across thousands of miles of air and sea between three separate services and two nations demonstrates "our unwavering commitment to regional defense agreements with our allies and partners," Rear Adm. George Wikoff, commander of the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group, said in the Air Force statement.

The combined exercise Tuesday, one of several like it this year, comes as military activity in the Western Pacific by the U.S. and its allies and by China continues to ratchet up.

The Chinese held recent exercises near the Taiwan Strait, along with a live-fire exercise Sunday by one of its warships in the South China Sea.

The U.S. on Tuesday sent a destroyer through the Taiwan Strait to demonstrate freedom of navigation, and on Saturday conducted flight exercises off the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan in the South China Sea.

In July, the Reagan and USS Nimitz put on two dual-carrier exercises in the South China Sea. The Reagan also rendezvoused in the Sea of Japan, also called the East Sea, with 14 JASDF fighters and a B-1B Lancer bomber from Andersen on Aug. 7 and with a pair of Lancasters on July 21 in the South China Sea.

**Staff members from each participating unit ... collaborated throughout the planning and execution phases.**

Lt. Col. Richard Behrmann  
Operations officer for Marine Aircraft Group 12



COURTNEY ROBERTSON/U.S. Marine Corps

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Brian Wolford took command of the 3rd Marine Logistics Group during a ceremony at Camp Kinser, Okinawa, on Wednesday.

## Marine general vows to lead logistics group out of pandemic

By MATTHEW M. BURKE  
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Marine Brig. Gen. Brian Wolford, fresh from Afghanistan, took over the 3rd Marine Logistics Group this week and pledged to lead his new command out of the coronavirus pandemic to something resembling normal.

The group, based at Camp Kinser, provides combat logistics support for the III Marine Expeditionary Force. Wolford assumed command Wednesday from Col. Maura Hennigan in a closed ceremony due to virus concerns. Hennigan is headed to the Pentagon to serve as a legislative liaison to the commandant for personnel, military justice and medical issues.

All U.S. bases on Okinawa are under a substantial risk of coronavirus infection, in military terms Health Protection Condition-Charlie, which was re-imposed after the number of cases on the island surged last month. Under condition Charlie, personal protection measures are mandatory, off-duty activities are limited and off-base travel is restricted to essential services such as medical appointments, grocery shopping and bill paying.

"There are things we need to do in order to protect our force, and the recommendations come from the medical professionals," Wolford told Stars and Stripes by phone Thursday. "We need to adhere to those and get back to nor-

mal as fast as possible so we can continue to do the mission."

Wolford said he expects to find a way forward despite the pandemic.

"That's one of my big pushes, is to get back to doing all of our jobs while adhering to the medical advice so we can continue to move on," he said.

As of Thursday, the coronavirus had infected 353 people affiliated with the U.S. military on Okinawa. The prefecture itself has more than 850 active cases overall.

Wolford plans to get the logistics group on a pre-pandemic footing by providing things like routine medical and dental services to III MEF again, he said Thursday.

The general also said he expects the group to continue its exercises unabated and to enhance its 3D printing capabilities.

The 3rd Marine Logistics Group is composed of 5,600 Marines and sailors throughout the Indo-Pacific region, a Marine statement said.

"What I want to focus on is getting back to the basics and supporting the Marines and sailors that we have here," he said. "It's amazing what you can accomplish when you can do your job well and then simply applying it to whatever the mission set you have to do. So I'm looking forward to getting back to the basics, which includes getting the Marines deployed, getting the Marines engaged throughout the

theater and keeping them sharp in their skill sets."

This is Wolford's second tour on Okinawa. He most recently commanded Bagram Airfield, the largest coalition airfield in Afghanistan, and served as deputy commanding general of the U.S. National Support Element-Afghanistan.

He is a prior enlisted combat engineer with a doctorate in interdisciplinary studies for leadership from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. According to his biography, Wolford has seen the world in wide-ranging assignments: logistics officer in Iraq and Afghanistan, hurricane relief in Florida, earthquake relief in Turkey, refugee operations in Cuba and deployments to the Mediterranean, Bosnia, Albania, Kosovo and South Korea.

Wolford said Thursday that he was looking forward to his new assignment because of the large scope of operations in the Indo-Pacific and how dynamic and flexible everything is there.

The greatest challenge, he said, is always the distance over water between objectives.

"My job here is to make [the Marines and sailors under my command] excellent in their field and to put my foot on the gas," Wolford said. "The other thing I promise them is they'll find no bigger fan or supporter for what they do out there than me."

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## MILITARY

# Reservist becomes 5th service member to die from virus

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — A 46-year-old Army reservist from Memphis, Tenn., died Monday of complications caused by the coronavirus, becoming the fifth American service member to succumb to the disease, military officials said Thursday.

Army Master Sgt. Brian K. Tolliver died in a Largo, Fla., hospital more than a month after first testing positive for the virus on July 10, according to an Army statement. Tolliver was the command paralegal for U.S. Army Reserve Command's headquarters in Pinellas Park near Largo.

Tolliver was the third Army Reserve soldier to die of the virus. His death was the 75th reported by the Pentagon within the Defense Department community, which includes troops, their family members, defense contractors and DOD civilian workers.

Tolliver was a father of three

who served 25 years in the Army, including 13 as a reservist, the service said.

"We feel a tremendous loss in our military family with the passing of Master Sgt. Tolliver," said Maj. Gen. Jonathan Woodson, commander of Army Reserve Medical Command. The coronavirus "has taken a dedicated soldier from our formation, and our thoughts and prayers go out to his family."

Tolliver's death comes as the coronavirus pandemic continues to plague locations where U.S. troops are serving around the world. This week, commanders in South Korea reinstated travel restrictions for most troops in that country after a new spike of cases there.

Worldwide, nearly 35,000 troops have tested positive for the virus since the beginning of the outbreak, according to Pentagon data released Wednesday. More than 19,000 of those service members have since recovered and



Army Master Sgt. Brian Tolliver

538 are now hospitalized, according to the Defense Department.

The Army has reported the most cases among the Pentagon's military services with 11,915. The Navy has reported 8,208 cases among its sailors, 5,299 Air Force troops have tested positive, as have 4,323 Marines. The Air and Army National Guard have reported 4,430 cases.

Pentagon officials have said the virus has impacted active-duty troops at a lesser rate than the general U.S. population. That rate has remained steady at roughly 5.3% testing positive, according to the Pentagon. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention this month said about 8.7% of Americans tested for the virus have tested positive.

Among the five service members to die of the disease, four were members of reserve components — the three Army reservists and an Army National Guard officer — and one was an active-duty sailor.

## Ramstein airmen join Bulgarian forces in paradrop exercises

*Stars and Stripes*

Airmen and C-130J aircraft from Ramstein's 37th Airlift Squadron are conducting paradrop exercises in Bulgaria, a Black Sea nation on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's southeastern flank.

About 750 U.S. and Bulgarian service members are participating in the deployment, which includes joint low-level training flights by both the C-130Js and Bulgarian C-27 Spartan transports.

The Thracian Summer exercise comes as the U.S. defense posture in Europe shifts its attention toward the Black Sea region, where Russia has been increasingly assertive following its 2008 war with Georgia and the occupation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014.

NATO's troop presence in the Black Sea region has been limited in contrast to the thousands of allied troops deployed to Poland and the Baltic nations to counter possible Russian threats. But last month, U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper announced that a

Stryker brigade will be sent to the region as part of the wider plan to restructure the presence of U.S. forces in Europe. The Navy has also regularly sent ships on patrols in the Black Sea in recent years.

Thracian Summer, previously held in 2018, is taking place at the international airport near the city of Plovdiv in central Bulgaria and the nearby Cheshnegirovo Air Base.

"Forward locations, like Plovdiv Airport and Cheshnegirovo, enable a collective defense capability and provide the U.S. and NATO the strategic and operational breadth needed to deter adversaries and assure partner nations," the Ramstein-based 86th Airlift Wing said in a statement.

The exercise is scheduled to conclude Aug. 28. A follow-on NATO exercise in September will include U.S. F-16 fighters and Bulgarian MiG-29 fighters as well, Bulgarian media reports said.

news@stripes.com

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## MIDEAST

# Trump reaffirms plan to withdraw troops from Iraq

By DEB RIECHMANN  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Thursday reaffirmed his plan to withdraw all U.S. troops from Iraq as quickly as possible as he met with the prime minister of Iraq to discuss ways to rein in pro-Iran militias in the country and counter residual threats from Islamic State sleeper cells.

"We look forward to the day when we don't have to be there," Trump said during an Oval Office meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi.

"We were there and now we're getting out. We'll be leaving shortly and the relationship is very good. We're making very big oil deals. Our oil companies are making massive deals. ... We're going to be leaving and hopefully we're going to be leaving a country that can defend itself."

Asked about a timetable for a full withdrawal, the president turned to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who replied: "As soon as we can complete the mission. The president has made very clear he wants to get our forces down to the lowest level as quickly as we possibly can. That's the mission he's given us and we're working with the Iraqis to achieve that."

There are more than 5,000 American troops in Iraq now. Last month, the top U.S. general for the Middle East said he believed the U.S. will keep a smaller but enduring presence in the country. Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie, the commander of U.S. Central Command, said he believes the Iraqis welcome the U.S. and coalition troops, especially in the ongoing fight to keep IS fighters from taking hold of the country again.

McKenzie has not said how many U.S. troops might stay. But he said Iraqi conventional forces now operate on their own. U.S.

and coalition forces continue to conduct training and counterterrorism operations, including with Iraqi commandos. Any final decisions, he said, would be coordinated with the Iraqi government.

Al-Kadhimi, who is backed by the United States, assumed office in May when Baghdad's relations with Washington were precarious following the U.S. killing of Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani in a drone strike at the Baghdad airport. The prime minister "has my ear," Trump said.

Al-Kadhimi has often had to walk a tightrope due to the U.S.-Iran rivalry. Asked if he was bringing any messages from Tehran following a recent visit there, al-Kadhimi told The Associated Press before he left for Washington: "We do not play the role of postman in Iraq."

The U.S. recognizes the cultural and religious ties that exist between Iran and Iraq, but the administration wants to decrease Iran's destabilizing influence in Iraq, often exercised by pro-Iranian militias.

Al-Kadhimi's administration inherited a myriad of crises. State coffers in the crude oil-dependent country were slashed following a severe drop in prices, adding to the woes of an economy already struggling with the aftershocks of the global coronavirus pandemic. The U.S. wants to make sure the Baghdad central government's limited resources also find their way to the Kurdish autonomous region in northern Iraq.

State violence used to quell the mass protests that erupted in October brought public trust in the government to a new low. Tens of thousands of Iraqis marched decrying rampant government corruption, poor services and unemployment, leading to the resignation of the previous premier, Adel Abdul-Mahdi.



IRANIAN DEFENSE MINISTRY/AP

The "Martyr Abu Mahdi" missile is seen in Iran. Iran unveiled two new missiles on Thursday. The missiles are named after top Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani and Iraqi militia leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, who were killed outside Baghdad's international airport in a U.S. strike in January.

## Iran state TV reports new missiles

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's state TV is reporting the country has unveiled two new missiles amid heightened tensions between Iran and the United States.

State TV said officials unveiled the two new missiles on Thursday — National Defense Industry Day in Iran. They are named after top Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani and Iraqi militia leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, who were killed outside Baghdad's interna-

tional airport in a U.S. strike in January.

The "Martyr Hajj Qassem" surface-to-surface ballistic missile has an 870-mile range, according to the semi-official Fars news agency. State TV said the "Martyr Abu Mahdi" naval cruise missile has a 620-mile range. State TV said the "Martyr Hajj Qassem" missile was not intercepted by a defense system during a test.

Also on Thursday, Iran unveiled a fourth-generation light turbo-fan engine for its advanced

drones. Iran also inaugurated the production line of its domestically produced "Owji" engine for the Iranian-made twin-seat Kowsar fighter jet.

Iran routinely unveils technological achievements for its armed forces, its space program and its nuclear efforts.

President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of the nuclear agreement between Iran and six major powers, known in 2018, and tensions between the two countries have escalated since.

## Trump weighs F-35 jet sales to UAE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Wednesday the U.S. is considering selling advanced American F-35 warplanes to the United Arab Emirates over the objections of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Trump told reporters at a White House news conference that the Emiratis had expressed interest in buying "quite a few" of the stealth fighter jets. He said such a sale was "under review" given the new dynamic between Israel and the UAE since the two nations agreed to normalize relations last week. Perhaps just as important, Trump said, is that the UAE can

afford to buy the planes.

"They have the money and they would like to order quite a few F-35s," Trump said. "It's the greatest fighter jet in the world, as you know, by stealth, totally stealth."

"They'd like to buy F-35s, we'll see what happens," Trump added. "It's under review, but they made a great advance in peace in the Middle East."

Netanyahu said Tuesday he would oppose the sale despite the historic UAE deal after an Israeli newspaper reported that the normalization accord that Trump brokered included language to supply the Arab Gulf nation with advanced U.S. weapons systems.

The Yediot Ahronot daily, citing American and Emirati sources, reported that Israeli acquiescence to the sales had clinched the deal for the Emiratis. Further, it reported that Netanyahu had made the deal behind the back of the Israeli defense establishment and kept Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi, both former military chiefs, in the dark about it.

In a statement, Netanyahu's office said the prime minister has opposed the sale of F-35s and other advanced weapons to any country in the Middle East, including Arab countries that have peace agreements with Israel.

## US won't seek death penalty against pair of Islamic State militants

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department has notified the British government that it will not pursue the death penalty against two Islamic State militants suspected in the beheadings of Western hostages, removing a hurdle in the potential prosecution of the men in the United States.

The decision could open the door to Britain to begin sharing evidence with federal prosecutors in the U.S. for any possible case against El Shabab, Elsheikh and Alexander Kotey. An earlier British court ruling had effectively blocked the sharing of evi-

dence with American authorities because the U.S. had not offered assurances that the death penalty, which was abolished years ago in the United Kingdom, was off the table.

"I know that the United Kingdom shares our determination that there should be a full investigation and a criminal prosecution of Kotey and Elsheikh," Attorney General William Barr wrote to British Home Secretary Priti Patel in a letter released by the Justice Department on Wednesday.

"These men are alleged to be members of the terrorist group the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham and to have been in-

involved in kidnappings, murders, and other violent crimes against the citizens of our two countries, as well as the citizens of other countries," he added.

Though the U.S. wants to prosecute the men, Barr told the British that the U.S. would move forward with plans to transfer them to the Iraqi criminal justice system for prosecution if American authorities do not soon receive the evidence that they seek.

The British men, captured two years ago by a Kurdish-led, U.S.-backed militia, are accused of participation in a brutal Islamic State group known for beheadings and bar-

baric treatment of American aid workers, journalists and other hostages in Syria.

U.S. officials have not announced any charges against the men, but have spoken of their desire to see members of the cell, nicknamed the "Beetles" by surviving captives because of their British accents, face justice.

"If we receive the requested evidence and attendant cooperation from the United Kingdom, we intend to proceed with a United States prosecution," Barr wrote. "Indeed, it is these unique circumstances that have led me to provide the assurance offered in this letter."

## VIRUS OUTBREAK

## Bases in S. Korea restricting travel

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — All U.S. military installations and garrisons in South Korea have reinstated travel restrictions for service members and their families as the country reports increases in coronavirus cases, a Defense Department official said Wednesday.

The travel restrictions come after U.S. Forces Korea on Monday raised its health protection condition to "Charlie," meaning there is a substantial risk, after a spike in new coronavirus cases in South Korea, according to a command statement. Only mission-essential personnel are to report to duty while anyone else must telework.

Because the entire country is now designated as "Charlie," all military installations and garrisons are now in a "red" status, said Col. Lee Peters, a spokesman for U.S. Forces Korea. Service members and their families will now need an exception to the policy in order to travel to and from South Korea.

On Wednesday, the Pentagon released the latest travel restriction statuses for 231 military installations around the world. South Korea are listed and all had their travel restrictions reinstated.

Those installations are Camp Casey, Camp Henry, Camp Humphreys, Yongsan Garrison, Fleet Activities Chinhae, Kunsan Air Base, and Osan Air Base, according to the Pentagon.

Travel restrictions were put in

place in March to try to prevent the spread of the virus within the Defense Department. Defense Secretary Mark Esper signed a memorandum May 22 that laid out the conditions needed for locations to allow for travel to and from bases.

"If installation conditions are subsequently not met, the approval authority decides if travel restrictions should be reinstated," the Pentagon documents states.

Installations have to meet specific criteria in order to have the travel restrictions lifted, including their health protection condition to be below "Charlie," and availability of essential services, according to the Pentagon document.

U.S. Forces Korea also mandated this week that personnel must wear masks when they are off-installation to protect themselves. The other two installations that reinstated their travel restrictions are Naval Training Center Orlando in Florida and Kirtland Air Force Base in New Mexico. Both installations had just lifted their travel restrictions Aug. 10, according to the Pentagon's installation status list released last week.

Four installations that have recently lifted their travel restrictions are Picatinny Arsenal in New Jersey, Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana, and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in California, according to the Pentagon.

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## Military on Guam entering health condition 'Charlie'

By SETH ROBSON  
Stars and Stripes

An upswing in new coronavirus cases on Guam has prompted the military there to increase its health protection condition, Joint Region Marianas announced Thursday.

Government officials on Guam reported 105 new coronavirus cases and one death Thursday, bringing the total number reported on the island to 704, including 126 service members, since March 12. Six people have died.

The military number does not include the approximately 1,150 sickened crewmembers of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, which was docked on Guam for two months during an outbreak that started in late March.

Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Base Guam, which had been at the "moderate" Health Protection Condition Bravo since Aug. 6, moved to the "substantial"

condition Charlie immediately, according to a Joint Region Marianas statement.

"There are no changes to installation access for eligible persons at this time," the statement said. "However, [the bases] may institute changes to individual base amenities as required to maintain mission readiness."

On Sunday, Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero, who tested positive for the coronavirus early this month, placed the island under "Pandemic Condition of Readiness 1," saying Guam needs "one intense attack on the virus."

The condition, which is set to expire Aug. 30, shuts nonessential businesses; forces schools to shift to virtual instruction; prohibits public gatherings, including religious services; and closes parks and beaches to everyone but those who are exercising while social distancing.

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## Cases surging in South Korea

By KIM GAMEL  
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea marked a seventh day of triple digit increases in coronavirus cases, with 288 reported Thursday, while U.S. Forces Korea said two American troops and a civilian defense contractor recently tested positive after traveling to the divided peninsula from the United States.

South Korean health authorities have struggled to contain the latest outbreak, which has largely been tied to church services in Seoul and surrounding areas, raising fears that they may not be able to stamp it out as they have done with previous clusters of infections.

The Korean Centers for Disease Control said the 288 new cases confirmed through midnight Wednesday, which included 135 in Seoul and 81 in nearby Gyeonggi province, raised the total to 16,346 since the first case was reported Jan. 20. The death toll increased by one to 307.

Meanwhile, 14,063 people were released after fully recovering from the respiratory disease caused by the virus, and 1,976 remained in isolation, according to the agency.

In all, 1,576 cases have been confirmed since the latest outbreak began last Friday, including more than 40% linked to the conservative Sarang Jeli church in northern Seoul.

USFK also said two more American troops and a civilian contractor had tested positive



MATTHEW KEELER/Stars and Stripes

Staff Sgt. Lamaar Melvin of the 51st Medical Operations Squadron gives a coronavirus test at Osan Air Base, South Korea, in July.

after landing at Incheon International Airport on commercial flights on Aug. 8, 11 and 13.

That raised to 160 the total number of cases affiliated with the military since late February, although only 24 of those were local transmissions.

The command insists the cases from abroad don't pose a risk to the broader community because of a strict testing and two-week quarantine program that catches them as soon as they arrive.

One of the latest individuals received positive results on their first mandatory coronavirus test prior to entering quarantine, while another initially tested negative but later developed symptoms and tested positive. The third individual was positive on the second test required to exit

the quarantine, USFK said.

All three have been transferred to isolation facilities on Camp Humphreys or Osan Air Base, and any transportation or quarantine facilities used by them have been cleaned, it said.

South Korean officials have sought to avoid blanket lockdowns but tightened coronavirus restrictions in the Seoul area, including limiting gatherings to a maximum of 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors, no spectators at sports venues, closure of high-risk facilities like bars and karaoke rooms and calls for people to stay home as much as possible.

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## VIRUS OUTBREAK

# Unemployment claims bounce back above 1M

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The number of laid-off workers seeking U.S. unemployment benefits rose to 1.1 million last week after two weeks of declines, evidence that many employers are still slashing jobs as the coronavirus bedevils the U.S. economy.

The latest figures, released Thursday by the Labor Department, suggest that more than five months after the viral outbreak erupted the economy is still weak, despite recent gains as some businesses reopen and some sectors like housing and manufacturing have rebounded. Jobless claims had fallen last week below 1 million for the first time since March, to 971,000. A rising number of people who have lost jobs say they consider their loss to be permanent.

The total number of people receiving unemployment aid declined last week from 15.5 million to 14.8 million, the government said Thursday. Those recipients are now receiving far less aid because a \$600-a-week federal benefit has expired, which means the unemployed must now get by solely on much smaller aid from their states. The loss of the federal benefit has deepened the struggles for many, including a higher risk of eviction from their homes.

President Donald Trump has signed an executive order to provide \$300 a week in federal unemployment aid, with money drawn from a disaster relief fund. Twenty-five states have said they will apply for the federal money, though they would need to re-employ their computer systems to do so. Other states are still considering whether to take that step, two have said they won't.

Some states may be hesitating to overhaul their unemployment systems because they expect

Congress to eventually pass a new rescue package with an enhanced jobless benefit that might not require any changes.

In states that decide to pay out the \$300, the government estimates it would take three weeks, on average, for the states to send the money to the unemployed. And initially, only enough money is being allotted to cover three weeks of payments. Even with subsequent grants, analysts estimate that there would be enough money to last only five or six weeks.

The continuing stream of layoffs comes against the backdrop of a modest recovery from a deep recession and a virus that is still paralyzing much of the economy. Home construction and sales have bounced back. So have auto purchases. But spending on travel, entertainment and many other services remains weak. Small businesses are struggling. And unemployment, at 10.2%, remains elevated.

More Americans are eating at restaurants, but the level of seated dining is still 54% below pre-pandemic levels, according to OpenTable. And though some employers are hiring, economists suspect that the pace is weakening.

Thursday's jobless claims report showed that in addition to people who applied last week for state benefits, roughly 540,000 others sought aid under a new program that has made self-employed and gig workers eligible for the first time. That figure isn't adjusted for seasonal variations, so it's reported separately from the state figures.

Including the self-employed and gig workers already receiving benefits, 28 million people are receiving some form of jobless aid, though that figure may include double-counting in some states. Double-figure is little changed from a year earlier.



SARAH GOLDBLUM/U.S. Air Force

An Air Force Academy cadet bumps elbows with a member of faculty at the academy's first-ever convocation ceremony on Aug. 2 to mark the beginning of the academic year.

## Air Force Academy, hotel housing cadets see small number of cases

By KARIN ZEITVOGEL  
Stars and Stripes

Several Air Force Academy cadets and a handful of employees at a hotel housing some academy students have tested positive for the coronavirus, officials said as the new school year got underway.

"Considerably less than 1% of our Air Force Academy Cadets and Preparatory School Cadet Candidates" are infected with the virus, academy spokesman Mike Slater said in an email.

A message sent to parents by academy leadership said the number of cases is "less than 1/2 of 1% of our population of students." There are roughly 4,400 cadets and prep school students at the academy, data on the academy's website show.

The academy declined to disclose an exact number of cases, citing Defense Department guidelines.

Also this week, three employees of the Great Wolf Lodge in Colorado Springs, Colo., tested positive for the virus. The lodge is one of several hotels where 400 cadets are being housed this semester to free up on-campus rooms for quarantine and isolation.

"These individuals have very little to no direct interaction with

resort guests," Jason Lasecki, a spokesman for the resort chain, said in a statement.

None of the cadets who tested positive this week were housed at the hotel, Slater said.

The academy reported few cases of the virus this spring when it dismissed the lower classes and kept seniors on campus to allow them to graduate. A number of cases have been reported and strict preventive measures have been taken since cadets and faculty began returning in waves starting in early June.

The last group of cadets returned to campus at the end of July and had completed an initial 14-day quarantine period, which included multiple tests for the virus, by the time classes began last week, Slater said. Some classes are held outdoors, there are plexiglass shields in indoor classrooms, masks have to be worn and social distancing is enforced on campus.

But once they've completed the first quarantine, upperclass cadets are allowed to leave campus to pick up a meal, attend religious services or visit their sponsor families, Slater said.

"Contact tracing will hopefully determine where the recent group of positive tests originated,

but positive tests are something we are expecting and planning for," he said.

The academy conducts around 750 random tests each week on cadets, faculty and staff, and anyone who "feels they have what could be a symptom of COVID is advised to go to the clinic," Slater said.

Cadets who test positive are placed in isolation in specially allocated dorm rooms, while anyone found through contact tracing to have been in close contact with an infected person or who self-reports symptoms is placed in quarantine.

One parent whose cadet went to the clinic after developing a symptom of the virus said few cadets are self-reporting because of the conditions they face in quarantine, including bland meals and 14 days with little contact with anyone else.

"If cadets don't go in for the little symptoms, then when they turn real ... all the folks they could get traced to means a whole lot of cadets will get pulled into quarantine," said the parent, who asked not to be identified to protect the cadet from potential reprisals.

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## US military cases fall across Japan as Tokyo sees spike

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — New coronavirus cases in Japan's capital city jumped Thursday to 339, just shy of twice the previous day's count, according to public broadcaster NHK, citing city authorities.

Meanwhile, new infections among the U.S. military in Japan continued to fall. The Marines on Okinawa reported four cases, all at Camp Courtney and all of them close contacts of another infected individual, according to a Facebook post by

Marine Corps Installations Pacific.

Tokyo cases had dipped from a previous daily high of 385 on Saturday to 186 on Wednesday, according to data on the Tokyo Metropolitan Government website.

The city government had warned its residents to refrain from travel beyond city borders, especially vacations far from home, and to avoid dining out at night and other activities in close, crowded conditions.

A second coronavirus surge began in late June in the city of 13 million, according to metro government data. Tokyo has 18,268

active cases with 1,614 hospitalized.

On top of the coronavirus, Tokyo has baked through a heat wave that killed 131 people so far this month, many of them over age 70, according to NHK, which cited the metro public health department.

The city center is off-limits to most U.S. military personnel, civilian employees and families.

Okinawa prefecture, home to about 30,000 U.S. troops, reported 45 new coronavirus cases on Thursday, a prefectural official told Stars and Stripes by phone.

The local community has more than 850 active cases and a total of 1,662 since July. Fifteen people have died since the pandemic began, the most recent on Wednesday evening, the official said.

Medical teams from the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force went to work in local hospitals, the Ministry of Defense Joint Staff tweeted Thursday. The ministry offered the teams Monday and Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki accepted the next day.

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## VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

## Teachers may need to stay in class after exposure

Associated Press

ATLANTA — New guidance from President Donald Trump's administration that declares teachers to be "critical infrastructure workers" could give the green light to exempting teachers from quarantine requirements after being exposed to COVID-19 and instead send them back into the classroom.

Keeping teachers without symptoms in the classroom, as a handful of school districts in Tennessee and Georgia have already said they may do, raises the risk that they will spread the respiratory illness to students and fellow employees. Experience from schools that reopened for face-to-face instruction in recent weeks shows that multiple teachers can be required by public health agencies to quarantine for 14 days during an outbreak. That could stretch a district's ability to keep providing in-person instruction.

Among the first districts to designate teachers as critical infrastructure workers was eastern Tennessee's Greene County, where the school board voted to give them that designation on July 13.

## Alabama

MONTGOMERY — Auburn University said a number of students are quarantined after four COVID-19 cases were reported in a campus residence hall and a fraternity house, university spokesman Preston Sparks said Wednesday.

The school did not name the fraternity or dorm. The university said that 32 students and eight employees tested positive for COVID-19 last week.

Sparks said the students will remain quarantined until each has received medical clearance. The students will complete coursework remotely while quarantined.

Auburn has about 30,000 students on its main campus. The university is requiring face coverings, both indoors and outdoors on campus, and has taken other steps to try to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

## Hawaii

HONOLULU — The Hawaii attorney general's office denied threatening a Republican state House of Representatives candidate with arrest for violating a traveler quarantine mandated to protect the islands from the spread of the coronavirus.

Lori Ford was in California visiting family when Hawaii's 14-day quarantine on arriving travelers went into effect in March. She returned in May to file candidacy papers and then returned to California.

Agents from the Hawaii attorney general's office contacted her and told her she would be arrested for violating the quarantine, Ford and her lawyer Bilal Essayli said. Because of that threat, she remains in California.

Ford said she didn't attempt to



CARL JUSTE, MIAMI HERALD/AP

Teacher Michaelle Joseph hands school supplies to a parent Wednesday in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood. Faculty and staffers handed out iPads, textbooks and other items to parents and guardians at Cathedral of St. Mary School.

seek an exemption to the quarantine so that she could file her candidacy papers. Essayli said she was required to appear in person at the elections office by June 2. Nedielyn Bueno of the state Office of Elections said Wednesday, however, that a candidate is not required to file candidacy papers in person.

## Kentucky

FRANKFORT — Kentucky's attorney general has ruled that the state cannot force religious schools to close as long as they are following health recommendations put in place to protect against the coronavirus.

Attorney General Daniel Cameron wrote in the Wednesday opinion that a forced closure of religious schools by Gov. Andy Beshear would violate the U.S. Constitution and state law, news outlets reported.

When asked about the opinion, Beshear said Wednesday that "nobody is trying to close any school that is complying with guidelines and preventing outbreaks."

Republican state Sen. Wil Schröder requested the opinion, according to the ruling.

## Michigan

LANSING — Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Wednesday that her administration is assessing the risk of reopening Michigan businesses that have been closed for five months under her orders to curb the spread of the coronavirus, saying she will have more to say next week.

Movie theaters, gyms and indoor pools are among the places

that remain barred from operating in much of the state amid the pandemic. The Democratic governor told reporters her office is working with the state health department to "drill down" into businesses that are closed, "where we can do another assessment on risk mitigation and determine if we might consider making some improvements in the policy."

Whitmer said other states have taken "bad" steps that "we don't want to do," but there are "perhaps some things that they have done and been successful."

She has come under criticism from the owners of theaters and fitness clubs — which are now open with capacity restrictions in many other states — for letting Detroit casinos reopen at 15% ca-

capacity about two weeks ago while keeping their businesses shut except in northern counties.

Other closed operations including amusement parks, arcades, bingo halls, bowling alleys, indoor climbing centers, indoor dance areas, skating rinks, trampoline parks, water parks and other similar recreational or entertainment facilities.

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## NATION

# Dems pound message: Democracy at stake

Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. — Former President Barack Obama warned that American democracy could falter if President Donald Trump is reelected, a stunning rebuke of his successor that was echoed by Kamala Harris at the Democratic Convention as she embraced her historic role as the first Black woman on a national political ticket.

Obama, himself a barrier breaker as the nation's first Black president, pleaded with voters Wednesday night to "embrace your own responsibility as citizens — to make sure that the basic tenets of our democracy endure. Because that's what is at stake right now. Our democracy."

Throughout their convention, the Democrats have summoned a collective urgency about the dangers of Trump as president. In 2016, they dismissed and sometimes trivialized him. Now they are casting him as an existential threat to the country. The tone signals anew that the fall campaign between Trump and Joe Biden, already expected to be among the most negative of the past half-century, will be filled with rancor and recrimination.

Yet on the third night of the Democrats' four-day convention, party leaders also sought to put forward a cohesive vision of their values and policy priorities, highlighting efforts to combat climate change and tighten gun laws. They drew a sharp contrast with Trump, portraying him as cruel in his treatment of immigrants, disinterested in the nation's climate crisis and in over his head on virtually all of the nation's most pressing challenges.

Democrats also demonstrated a hope that Biden, a 77-year-old white man, can revive the coalition that helped put Obama into office, with minorities, younger voters and college-educated women blunting Trump's lock on many white and rural voters.

The evening marked a celebration of the party's leading women, including remarks from Hillary Clinton, the first woman to become a major ticket presidential nomi-



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

**Democratic vice presidential candidate Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., speaks during the third day of the Democratic National Convention on Wednesday, at the Chase Center in Wilmington, Del.**

nee; House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Massachusetts' Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who challenged Biden during the primary and is now supporting his campaign.

Harris, a 55-year-old California senator and the daughter of Jamaican and Indian immigrants, addressed race and equality in a personal way Biden cannot when he formally accepts his party's presidential nomination.

"There is no vaccine for racism. We have got to do the work," Harris said, her words emphatic though she was speaking in a largely empty arena near Biden's Delaware home.

"We've got to do the work to fulfill the promise of equal justice under law," she added. "None of us are free until all of us are free."

Just 75 days before the election, Biden must energize the disparate factions that make up the modern Democratic Party — a coalition that spans generation, race and ideology. And this fall voters must deal with concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic that has created health risks for those who want to vote in person — and postal slowdowns for mail-in ballots, which Democrats blame on Trump.

Democrats hope that Harris and Obama in particular can help bridge the divide between those reassured by Biden's establishment credentials and those craving bolder change.

The pandemic forced Biden's team to abandon the traditional convention format in favor of an all-virtual affair that has eliminated much of the pomp and cir-

cumstance that typically defines political conventions. It was completely silent, for example, as Harris took the stage to make history at the Chase Center in downtown Wilmington. She was flanked by American flags but no family, and her audience consisted of a few dozen reporters and photographers.

After two nights that featured several Republicans, the proceedings on Wednesday emphasized core Democratic values on areas like climate change and gun violence that particularly resonate with younger voters.

On guns, Biden wants to repeal a law shielding firearm manufacturers from liability lawsuits, impose universal background checks for purchases and ban the manufacture and sale of assault weapons and high capacity magazines. On climate, Biden has proposed a \$2 trillion plan to invest in clean energy and end carbon emissions from U.S. power plants by 2035, even though his proposals don't go as far as activists' preferred Green New Deal.

Wednesday night, former Arizona Rep. Gabby Giffords reflected on her own journey of pain and recovery from a severe brain injury nearly a decade after being shot while meeting with constituents. She urged America to support Biden.

"I struggle to speak, but I have not lost my voice," Giffords said. "Vote, vote, vote."

It's Trump's turn next. The Republican president, who abandoned plans to host his convention in North Carolina and in Florida, is expected to break tradition and accept his nomination from the White House lawn.

In the meantime, he's seeking to take attention from Biden. Trump planned to stop near his Democratic rival's birthplace of Scranton, Pa., on Thursday.

Late Wednesday, Trump tweeted about Obama and Clinton, taunting: "Welcome, Barack and Crooked Hillary. See you on the field of battle!"

## Soldiers: DOD rules limit political activity

FROM FRONT PAGE

earlier in the evening that promised to end the politicization of the military.

Defense Department Directive 1344.10 forbids service members from participating in any partisan political campaign, or elections, candidate, cause, or issue while in uniform. Service members are allowed to engage in virtually any political activity out of uniform, but the activity cannot be perceived as being endorsed by the military.

"Military personnel should abide by DOD regulations regarding political conduct while in uniform," said Rep. Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., who is an Iraq War veteran. "If you are in uniform, do not get involved in political events."

The soldiers stood at the position of attention as Alitama Sotoa, the chairman of the American Samoa Democratic Party, cast the territory's 11 votes to Biden in a brief segment. Standing next to Sotoa was Petti Matila, who serves as an executive assistant at the American Samoa

Department of Commerce. The soldiers did not speak and were not acknowledged.

"Members on active duty may not participate in partisan activities such as soliciting or engaging in partisan fundraiser activities, serving as the sponsor of a partisan club, or speaking before a partisan gathering," the Defense Department policy states. "In addition, all military members, including National Guard and Reserve forces, are prohibited from wearing military uniforms at political campaign events."

An official with the Democratic Party told ABC News that the inclusion of the soldiers was an oversight.

"Each state was asked to highlight issues and values that matter most and the American Samoa delegation wanted to highlight their commitment to military service when they filmed their segment," the unnamed official said.

American Samoa has one of the highest rates of military enlistment of any state or territory, according to Army. In 2014, re-

cruiting in Pago Pago ranked the best out of the Army's 885 recruiting stations. It is home to the 100th Infantry Battalion, the only infantry unit in the Army Reserve. The battalion also has elements in Hawaii, Guam and Saipan.

Paul Rieckhoff, who founded Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, a nonprofit veterans-advocacy group, called using troops as a backdrop a "failure of leadership," and the soldiers are likely to face serious consequences.

"The bigger issue of politicizing the military is it put these soldiers in a bad position; these soldiers should get reprimanded and will," said Rieckhoff, who now hosts "Angry Americans," a podcast about veterans issues and national security. "Even if the soldiers didn't know better, the DNC does or should know better ... This is why you need people who understand the military around ... You can dismiss it, our military is supposed to be divided from our politics; we aren't a banana republic."

Ahead of the roll-call vote,



DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION/AP

**Alitama Sotoa and Petti Matila of American Samoa speak during the state roll call vote on second night of the Democratic National Convention on Tuesday.**

more than a dozen Democratic lawmakers and key figures spoke at the party's veterans and military families caucuses, which was livestreamed. Lawmakers attacked the administration of President Donald Trump for its use of the armed forces for political purposes.

"Using our troops as political props, we've all seen it, we know it," Rep. Patrick Murphy, D-Fla., said Tuesday evening.

Murphy criticized Trump for deploying troops against protesters to counter the recent civil

upheaval sparked by the killing of George Floyd while in police custody.

"The military can't be seen as the tools of one particular president," said Rep. Chrissy Houlahan, D-Pa.

Houlahan, an Air Force veteran and member of the House Armed Services Committee, said if the military is seen as "a political institution," it could threaten democracy.

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## NATION

# Blazes: Firefighting operations restricted amid virus concerns

## FROM FRONT PAGE

In central California, a pilot on a firefighting flight near Fresno died when his helicopter crashed, according to The Associated Press, and the National Transportation Safety Board is investigating.

Tens of thousands have been instructed to evacuate from advancing flames, with more told to be ready to flee if necessary.

The fires come as California has been enduring a record-breaking heat wave that has prompted rolling blackouts due to high electricity demands for air conditioning and other uses, as well as the coronavirus pandemic, which has killed more than 10,000 in the state.

In Solano County, southwest of Sacramento, officials ordered the evacuation of about 8,000 residents near the Russian River Wednesday, and the SCU Lightning Complex in eastern San Francisco Bay is threatening nearly 3,800 homes and businesses in five counties.

According to the AP, one of the fires in Stanislaus County injured between five to seven people, including one who had major burn injuries.

In San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties south of San Francisco, about 20,000 people were ordered to evacuate because of a fire threatening communities there, part of the CZU Lightning Complex. Nearly two-dozen homes had burned as of Wednesday night, fire officials reported.

The state's fire-fighting resources are overextended, ac-

cording to Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom and fire officials, given the number of large fires burning simultaneously. Cal Fire spokesman Jonathan Cox told the AP that some firefighters are suffering grueling 72-hour shifts instead of the typical 24-hour rotations.

"We're in the unfortunate position where firefighters are going to be spending several days out on the fire line," Cox said. "It's grueling, it's exhausting."

Newsom originally appealed for aid from neighboring states but expanded the state's call for help to the entire country on Wednesday as blazes raged out of control.

Concerns regarding the spread of COVID-19 are limiting firefighting operations, wildfire expert Bill Stewart told the Sacramento Bee. "They can't put as many firefighters next to each other on the fire line," he said. "The pickup trucks (transporting crews) are historically full of people. Now they're limited to one or two."

The virus has also meant that prison firefighters are not being utilized due to COVID outbreaks in penitentiaries.

In a press conference Thursday morning, Cal Fire officials said the CZU August Lightning Complex, located near the coast southwest of San Francisco, is unprecedented for that region in terms of its rapid growth and intensity.

"When you hear a term 'sounds like a jet engine or a freight train,' that's exactly what it sounds like," a Cal Fire chief said.



NOAH BERGEN/AP

Flames from the LNU Lightning Complex fires consume a home in unincorporated Napa County, Calif., on Wednesday.

## Travis Air Force Base orders nearly all personnel to evacuate ahead of fire

Stars and Stripes

The base commander at Travis Air Force Base, Calif., has ordered most personnel to evacuate ahead of the LNU Lightning Complex Fire near Fairfield and Vacaville.

"All non-mission essential personnel residing in Travis AFB housing or lodging are directed to evacuate immediately," the base said in a statement released late Wednesday. "Egress should be through the South and North Gates. Do not use the Main Gate or Hospital Gates."

The announcement directs mission-essential personnel to contact their chain of command for duty status.

No lodging is available on Travis and service

members and their families should stay with family or friends, proceed to evacuation centers or secure commercial lodging outside of the evacuation area, according to the release.

The base is activating its Emergency Family Assistance Center to assist with relocation due to the evacuation. Contact information will be provided when available, the base announced.

Once the evacuation order has been lifted, additional information will be released through the comptroller squadron regarding reimbursement of lodging and per diem expenses for mandatory evacuees.

The latest evacuation orders can be found at: <https://local.nixle.com/county/ca/solano/>.

[news@stripes.com](mailto:news@stripes.com)

## Ex-Trump adviser Bannon charged in border wall scheme

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Former White House adviser Steve Bannon was arrested Thursday on charges that he and three others ripped off donors to an online fundraising scheme "We Build The Wall."

The charges were contained in an indictment unsealed in Manhattan federal court that alleged Bannon received over \$1 million himself, using some to secretly pay a co-defendant, Brian Kolfage, and to cover hundreds of thousands of dollars of Bannon's personal expenses.



Bannon

Federal prosecutors alleged that Bannon and three others "orchestrated a scheme to defraud hundreds of thousands of donors" in connection with an online crowdfunding campaign that raised more than \$25 million to build a wall along the southern border of the United States.

According to the

indictment, Bannon promised that 100% of the donated money would be used for the project, but the defendants collectively used hundreds of thousands of dollars in a manner inconsistent with the organization's public representations.

The indictment said they faked invoices and sham "vendor" arrangements, among other ways, to hide what was really happening.

Bannon is among numerous former Trump associates who have found themselves under indictment or in jail, including his former campaign chair, Paul Manafort,

his longtime lawyer, Michael Cohen, and his former national security adviser, Michael Flynn.

The defendants learned last October from a financial institution that the "We Build the Wall" campaign might be under federal criminal investigation and took additional steps to conceal the fraud, according to the indictment.

Charges included conspiracy to commit wire fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering.

## Portland protesters gather at federal immigration building

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Authorities declared an unlawful assembly at a Portland protest outside an Immigration and Customs Enforcement building.

Portland police said Wednesday

night that people were ordered to disperse.

Tuesday night and early Wednesday protesters broke out the windows of a county government building, sprayed lighter fluid inside and set a fire.

The fire was at the Multnomah

County Building. Portland officers late Tuesday declared a riot outside the county building after demonstrators in a crowd of about 200 started fires in dumpsters, used rocks to smash first floor windows and tossed burning material inside, police said.

Demonstrations in which fires have been set, objects have been thrown and police have fired "crowd control munitions" have gripped Oregon's biggest city for more than two months following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Participants have repeatedly broken into the offices of a police union headquarters building and last month clashed for weeks with federal agents dispatched to protect a U.S. courthouse targeted by protesters.

## NATION

# Judge mulls \$600M Flint water deal

Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. — A proposed \$600 million deal between the state of Michigan and residents of the impoverished, majority-Black city of Flint who were harmed by lead-tainted water is a step toward making amends for a disaster that upended life in the city. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Thursday.

"What happened in Flint should have never happened, and financial compensation with this settlement is just one of the many ways we can continue to show our support for the city of Flint and its families," Whitmer, a Democrat, said, adding that she was "deeply sorry for the uncertainty and troubles" the crisis had caused.

The disaster made Flint a nationwide symbol of governmental mismanagement. More than two years of negotiations between the state and attorneys representing

thousands of city residents produced an agreement to create a fund from which victims will be able to seek payments.

"Flint residents have endured more than most, and to draw out the legal back-and-forth even longer would have achieved nothing but continued hardship," Attorney General Dana Nessel said.

The proposed deal announced Thursday would need to be approved by U.S. District Judge Judith Levy, who is overseeing lawsuits against the state.

Nearly 80% will go to claimants who were minor children during the period covered by the deal, with the largest share — 64.5% — devoted to children who were ages 6 and under when first exposed to the contaminated water.

If approved, the settlement would push state spending on the Flint water crisis over \$1 billion. Michigan already has pumped more than \$400 million

into replacing water pipes, purchasing filters and bottled water, children's health care and other assistance.

Lead is a powerful toxin that can harm people at any age but is especially dangerous to children, potentially damaging the brain and nervous system and causing learning and behavior problems.

Reports of elevated levels of lead in the blood of some children were among warning signs that prompted officials to acknowledge problems more than a year after Flint switched its water source from the city of Detroit to the Flint River in April 2014. The move was made to cut costs while Flint was under control of a state-appointed emergency manager during the administration of former Republican Gov. Rick Snyder.

State environmental regulators advised that Flint, located about 70 miles north of Detroit, not

apply corrosion controls to the water, leading to contamination by lead that leached from aging pipes. Residents of the city with a population of nearly 100,000 people quickly began complaining that the water was discolored and had a bad taste and smell. They blamed it for rashes, hair loss and other health concerns, but local and state officials insisted it was safe.

Researchers with Virginia Tech University reported in summer 2015 that samples of Flint water had abnormally high lead levels. Shortly afterward, a group of doctors announced that local children had high levels of lead in their blood and urged Flint to stop using water from the river.

Snyder eventually acknowledged the problem, accepted the resignation of his environmental chief and pledged to aid the city, which resumed using Detroit water.

## 1 year for vet who lied about PTSD, Silver Star

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

ATLANTA — A veteran who collected federal benefits after faking a mental health condition and who falsely claimed to have earned two military honors was sentenced to a year in prison.

Gregg Ramsdell, 61, of Columbus, Ga., was also sentenced to three years supervised release and ordered to pay \$76,000 to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Ramsdell had pleaded guilty to one count of false statements and one count of violation of the Stolen Valor Act.

"Ramsdell's conduct does a disservice to all of those who exhibit true valor, serving honorably and courageously in our nation's armed forces. He will pay the penalty for claiming to be the hero he was not, and reaping monetary benefits reserved for our nation's true heroes," said U.S. Attorney Charlie Peeler.

Peeler said Ramsdell was sentenced to the top of the guideline range for the crime.

Ramsdell admitted that he falsely claimed to have suffered post-traumatic stress disorder when he applied for disability payments from the VA on Sept. 7, 2014. Ramsdell wrote he witnessed horrible atrocities during deployment in Afghanistan from October 2008 to March 2009, including "men, women and children being executed. Women holding babies while detonating themselves. IED explosions causing severe bodily injuries and death. Retrieving body parts and bagging them."

He also claimed these experiences made him "unable to live a normal life." The VA gave him added PTSD benefits retroactive to his military discharge date of June 1, 2014, totaling \$76,000.

But Ramsdell was not in Afghanistan during period of time he claimed to witness the atrocities that supported his PTSD claim, and he admitted to investigators that he lied about having PTSD. In addition, Ramsdell obtained a civilian position at U.S. Army Fort Benning, Ga., in 2017, in part because his résumé listed that he was both a Silver Star and Purple Heart with Cluster recipient. He never received these honors.

The Stolen Valor Act of 2013 makes it a crime to pass oneself off as a war hero in order to claim money, employment, property or other tangible benefits.

**'Ramsdell's conduct does a disservice to all of those who exhibit true valor.'**

Charlie Peeler  
U.S. Attorney

## Victims want Golden State Killer to live in fear

By DON THOMPSON

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Since death row isn't an option for serial killer and rapist Joseph James DeAngelo, his victims want him sent to the toughest possible prison in California to live in daily terror of other inmates.

But they may not have much say over where or how the 74-year-old former police officer is imprisoned once he is sentenced on Friday. State corrections officials said they must make their own evaluation about where and how the man known as the Golden State Killer can be housed.

He "deserves the worst possible environment, where he can live in fear as his victims did," said Sandy James, the sister of rape victim Debbie Strauss, who died in 2016.

Others have made similar recommendations during hearings that resumed Thursday with testimony from loved ones of victims killed by DeAngelo. Rape victims testified during the first two days.

Jennifer Carole, daughter of murder victim Lynn Smith, said it is important that DeAngelo be housed among other inmates rather than in isolation.

Her father was slain in 1980 at age 43 in Ventura County. His wife, 33-year-old Charlene Smith, was raped and killed.

"If he's in general population, I think he would have to live with the consequences of his actions," Jennifer Carole said in an interview before her testimony Thursday. "If he's in solitary, he gets that buffer, and I don't think he's earned that buffer in any way."

Sacramento County Superior Court Judge Michael Bowman will formally sentence DeAngelo to consecutive life prison sentences on Friday under a plea deal that will spare him the death



SANTIAGO MEJIA, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE/AP

Jane Carson-Sandler confronts Joseph James DeAngelo during the second day of victim impact statements Wednesday in Sacramento, Calif.

penalty.

DeAngelo pleaded guilty in June to 13 murders and 13 rape-related charges between 1975 and 1986.



DeAngelo

which the statute of limitations had expired.

Corrections officials said they will have to consider more than DeAngelo's crimes and his victims' wishes when they de-

cide where and how he will be imprisoned.

Considerations include his medical and mental health needs, notoriety and safety concerns — potentially key calculations given his age and headline-grabbing crimes. Prosecutors have been trying to counter DeAngelo's courtroom appearance as a feeble man confined to a wheelchair, noting in a court filing that jail video shows him to be "healthy and physically active."

"The court can make a recommendation, but ultimately, CDCR (the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) is the housing authority for the inmate population," department spokeswoman Terry Thornton

said in an email.

The department has a special protective unit at Corcoran State Prison for high-profile inmates, though it's not clear if DeAngelo would go there. Notable past residents have included Charles Manson and Sirhan Sirhan.

On Wednesday, DeAngelo stared ahead with no response — as he has throughout the hearings — as Gay Hardwick described in detail the pain she has endured since he assaulted her in 1978.

She told the judge she is certain that DeAngelo is lobbying to serve his life sentence "in some prison nursing home for old murdering psychopaths where he thinks he will be treated more like a patient than an inmate."

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Signs suggest panda is bearing a healthy fetus

**DC** WASHINGTON—New signs emerged Monday suggesting that giant panda Mei Xiang is bearing a healthy fetus, as an ultrasound showed "exciting movements," according to the National Zoo.

Her fetus was kicking and swimming in the amniotic fluid, the zoo said in a tweet. In addition, the tweet said, its spine and blood flow were visible.

Last Friday, the zoo said an ultrasound that morning showed what looked like a fetus. Officials said then they were hopeful that a healthy cub could soon be born.

## Police: Men broke into home wearing monitors

**FL** HOLLYWOOD — A group of men on pretrial release are behind a string of burglaries carried out while they were wearing ankle monitors that track their locations, police said. Authorities seized more than \$150,000 in cash, an AK-47, a Smith & Wesson handgun, cell-phones, iPads, jewelry, designer handbags, ammunition, blank checks, fraudulent debit and credit cards, and a stolen vehicle, the South Florida Sun Sentinel reported.

Zion Odain Denvor Hall, 21, Tyrek Davontae Williams, 19, and Tremaine Raekwon Hill, 18, were arrested last Friday. They are accused of being part of a criminal organization committing burglaries, armed burglaries, fraud, gun thefts and other criminal acts, Hollywood police said Tuesday.

They were taken into custody while under house arrest awaiting trial on unrelated charges.

## Man arrested in theft of 24 guns from shop

**MI** BROWN CITY — A man has been arrested in connection with the theft of more than 24 firearms from an outdoors sports shop.

The man's name was not released. He faces federal charges, according to the Lapeer County sheriff's office.

Detectives believe three men broke into the store late last week in Brown City, 73 miles north of Detroit. Sheriff's deputies and agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives recovered 22 of the stolen guns after a search warrant was executed in Saginaw, The Detroit News reported Tuesday.

## Board votes to change Tomahawk mascots

**CT** GLASTONBURY — Glastonbury High School's athletic teams will no longer be known as the "Team of Aloha." The Glastonbury Board of Education voted 7-1 Monday night to eliminate the nickname, citing racial insensitivity. There are currently 17 Connecticut schools that still use mascots or images associated with Native Americans or other Indigenous peoples.

Glastonbury High principal Nancy Bean said a student com-



JESSE TINSLEY, THE (SPOKANE, WASH.) SPOKESMAN-REVIEW/AP

## In the habit of thrill-seeking

A rafting group, including nuns from Mount St. Michael, hit some whitewater with a rafting guide from Wiley E. Waters on the Spokane River, on Sunday, west of downtown Spokane, Wash. Hundreds of tubers, kayakers and others enjoyed the river for the mostly flat water float from Peaceful Valley or High Bridge Park to Downriver Park and Riverside State Park.

mittee will be formed to find a new mascot.

## Officials: Man sought to extort money from dad

**MS** TUPELO — A man has been accused of faking his own kidnapping in Mississippi to extort money from his father who lives in Virginia.

The investigation into the case began last week when Andrew Blake Hawks' father told deputies he had received a video call that showed his son tied against a tree with a gun pointed to his head, the Lee County Sheriff's Office said in a statement Monday.

Hawks' father told investigators that the alleged kidnappers had demanded money in exchange for his son's life. When they did not receive the money by the deadline that same day, deputies said the alleged kidnappers threatened to cut off Hawks' fingers and fire guns that led his father to believe Hawks was killed.

Later that evening, the suspects were told the money had been transferred through Western Union. Police did not disclose how much money Hawks was trying to receive. When investigators arrived at the store where the money would be picked up, deputies said they saw Hawks, 24, attempting to get the money. He was arrested at the scene.

## THE CENSUS

# \$487K

The approximate amount of money a West Virginia man stole from a church.

Robert Dale Adkins, 76, of Ona, has been sentenced to two years and nine months in federal prison for mail fraud. Prosecutors said Adkins was treasurer at Antioch Baptist Church from around 2012 until late 2018. He had access to the church's checking account and was authorized to sign checks on behalf of the church. But checks he signed went to pay personal creditors as well as for personal items without the church's approval, prosecutors said.

## Man injured at track meet files a lawsuit

**SD** SIOUX FALLS — A man who was seriously injured when he was hit by a discus at a South Dakota high school track meet has filed a lawsuit seeking damages.

Michael Moses was watching the South Dakota State High School Track Meet with his family in Sioux Falls last year and was standing in the spectator area when a competitor threw a discus that struck the Teen man in the face.

Moses collapsed and lost consciousness. His lawsuit against the South Dakota High School Activities Association and the Sioux Falls School District says his nose was broken, teeth were knocked out, his jaw had to be reset and he underwent a bone and gum graft.

The lawsuit filed in Minnehaha

County alleges negligence in setting up the discus spectator area.

South Dakota High School Activities Association director Dan Swartos told The Argus Leader that insurance companies are still working on the case. The Sioux Falls School District did not comment.

## Authorities rescue child locked in gun safe

**MD** ELLICOTT CITY — Authorities in Maryland freed a 5-year-old who became locked inside a large gun safe.

The child's mother called 911 around noon Tuesday to report that the 5-year-old had somehow gotten trapped inside the safe. WRC-TV quoted Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services spokesman Brad Tanner as saying, "Crews managed to break a hole in the back wall

of the safe to save the child, according to photos posted by the department on social media.

Rescuers performed air monitoring during the process, authorities said. The child spent at least 40 minutes inside the safe, which did not contain any guns at the time, according to the news outlet. The child was evaluated and released by medics.

## Unmarked graves of slaves found on campus

**SC** CLEMSON — The possible locations of hundreds of unmarked graves have been discovered in a Clemson University cemetery, including those of slaves and Black men whose hard forced labor built the campus long after the Civil War.

The graves are thought to be of those enslaved at John C. Calhoun's Fort Hill Plantation from about 1830 to 1865, as well as sharecroppers and convicts leased from the state to construct campus buildings from 1890 to 1915, the university said in a statement Monday.

Researchers used radar technology to identify the possible locations of at least 215 bodies in Woodland Cemetery, the graveyard beside the football stadium, where Calhoun's family and university employees are buried.

From wire reports



## WORLD



Col. Assimi Goita, one of the soldiers identifying themselves as the National Committee for the Salvation of the People, sits with others during a televised broadcast Wednesday in Bamako, Mali.

## Army colonel claims he's in charge of junta in Mali

Associated Press

BAMAKO, Mali — A colonel in Mali's army says he's now in charge of the West African country, declaring himself chairman of the junta that forced the democratically elected but unpopular president to resign.

Col. Assimi Goita, one of the five military officers who announced this week's coup on the state broadcaster ORTM, declared himself chairman of the junta now in power.

"By making this intervention (the coup), we have put Mali first," Goita said in a broadcast that showed him meeting with the top officials of government ministries and urging them to resume work Thursday.

"Mali is in a sociopolitical and security crisis," he said. "There is no more room for mistakes."

Across Africa and around the world, leaders have strongly condemned this week's coup, calling for an immediate return to civilian rule and the release of

ex-President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and his prime minister, Boubou Cisse.

The two leaders were detained by mutinous soldiers on Tuesday after they surrounded the president's private residence in Bamako and fired shots into the air. Under duress, Keita later announced his resignation on state television, saying he did not want any blood to be shed to keep him in power.

Observers fear the political upheaval will allow Islamic extremists in Mali to expand their reach. A power vacuum after a previous coup in 2012 allowed al-Qaida-linked militants to take over major towns in northern Mali where they implemented their strict interpretation of Islamic law. Former colonizer France, which maintains strong economic and political ties to Mali, later led a military intervention to oust them from power in 2013.

But those jihadis have since regrouped and launched relentless

attacks on the Malian military, as well as U.N. peacekeepers and regional forces trying to stabilize the volatile country. The extremists have moved southward, inflaming tensions between ethnic groups in central Mali.

Goita, the new strongman, had been head of a special military unit based in central Mali. He also had taken part in the annual Flintlock training organized by the U.S. military to help Mali and other Sahel countries better fight extremists.

Keita won the 2013 election in a landslide, emerging from a field of more than two dozen candidates to get more than 77% of the vote. He won reelection five years later, but his political fortunes have tumbled in the past year.

Analysts said there were few signs that opposition leaders were aware of the coup plot, though they now stand to benefit through an opportunity to serve in any transitional government that emerges.

## Berlin security services: Iraqi accused in highway attacks was not on their radar

Associated Press

BERLIN — German authorities said Thursday that a 30-year-old man accused of deliberately driving his car into other vehicles along a major Berlin highway wasn't previously on the security services' radar.

The Iraqi citizen crashed into a car, two motorcycles and a motor scooter Tuesday night. Six people were injured, three of them severely. He was charged with at least three counts of attempted

murder and moved to a psychiatric jail Wednesday night.

"He was not on the radar," a spokesman for Berlin's senate of the interior said, the German news agency dpa reported. While intelligence services in the German capital weren't aware of the man, he was known to police for assault and resisting officers.

Berlin prosecutors said Wednesday that the suspect, who was born in Baghdad in 1990 and came to Germany as an asylum seeker several years ago, may

have been motivated by Islamist ideology. Authorities said there are also indications that the man is suffering from psychological problems and that "a religiously motivated background cannot be excluded."

Authorities said that one of the three severely injured persons, a Berlin firefighter, was still in intensive care Thursday.

"His condition is serious," a fire department spokesman told the dpa. "We are with him in our thoughts and hope for the best."

## Russian politician in coma after alleged poisoning

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny is in a coma and on a ventilator in a hospital intensive care unit after falling ill from suspected poisoning that his allies believe is linked to his political activity.

The 44-year-old foe of Russia's President Vladimir Putin fell unwell on a flight back to Moscow from Tomsk, a city in Siberia, and was taken to a hospital after the plane made an emergency landing in Omsk, Navalny's spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh said on Twitter.

"He is in a coma in grave condition," she said on Twitter.

She told the Echo Moskvy radio station that he must have consumed poison in tea he drank at an airport cafe before boarding the plane early Thursday. During the flight, Navalny started sweating and asked her to talk to him so that he could "focus on the sound of a voice." He then went to the bathroom and lost consciousness, and was been in a coma in grave condition ever since.

"Doctors are saying the toxin was absorbed quicker with hot liquid," she tweeted, adding that Navalny's team called police to the hospital.

Anatoly Kalinichenko, deputy chief doctor of the Omsk hospital where the politician is being treated, told reporters that Navalny was in grave, yet stable

condition. Kalinichenko said doctors are considering a variety of diagnoses, including poisoning, but refused to give details, citing a law preventing doctors from disclosing confidential patient information.

State news agency Tass reported that police were not considering deliberate poisoning, citing an anonymous source in law enforcement who said "it is not unlikely that he drank or consumed something yesterday himself."

Yarmysh on Twitter bristled at that suggestion: "Of course. It's just the tea was bad. This is what the state propaganda is going to do now — yell that there was no deliberate poisoning, he (did something) accidentally, he (did something) himself."

The secretary general of Chancellor Angela Merkel's party, Paul Ziemiak, has offered Germany's help in providing medical treatment for Navalny.

Last year, Navalny was rushed to a hospital from prison where he was serving a sentence following an administrative arrest, with what his team said was suspected poisoning. Doctors then said he had a severe allergic attack and discharged him back to prison the following day.

Navalny's Foundation for Fighting Corruption has been exposing graft among government officials, including some at the highest level.

## North Korea sets rare party meeting after economic shortfall

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — With unusual candor, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un admitted that U.S.-led sanctions, the pandemic and devastating floods have hurt his country's dismal economy as his ruling party scheduled a rare congress in January to set development goals for the next five years.

Kim announced his first five-year development plan with goals of improving North Korea's power supply and agricultural and manufacturing production during the last Workers' Party congress in 2016, its first in 36 years.

But at Wednesday's meeting of the party's decision-making Central Committee, Kim acknowledged economic shortcomings caused by "unexpected and inevitable challenges in various

aspects and the situation in the region surrounding the Korean Peninsula," the North's official Korean Central News Agency reported Thursday.

Experts said the coronavirus derailed some of Kim's major economic goals after North Korea imposed a lockdown that significantly reduced trade with China, its major ally and economic lifeline — and likely hampered its ability to mobilize its workforce.

In a closed-door briefing to South Korean lawmakers on Thursday, Seoul's spy agency said the stress of managing state affairs caused Kim to recently delegate some of his powers to a select group of senior officials, including his sister, Kim Yo Jong, who is not chiefly involved in shaping policies toward Washington and Seoul.

## WORLD

# Belarus' prosecutors open security probe against opposition activists

Associated Press

MINSK, Belarus — Prosecutors in Belarus opened a criminal probe Thursday against opposition activists who set up a council to negotiate a democratic transition of power amid massive protests against official election results that extended the 26-year rule of the country's authoritarian leader.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, who has dismissed the protesters as Western puppets, had threatened opposition leaders with criminal charges. Following up on his warning, prosecutors opened a criminal investigation on charges of un-

dermining national security.

A leading opposition figure also reported being threatened with arrest as post-election protests continued in Minsk and other cities for the 12th straight day. Demonstrators are challenging the official election results that showed Lukashenko, 65, winning a sixth term with 80% of the vote and demanding his resignation.

The Belarusian Prosecutor General's office said the creation of the Coordination Council that met for the first time Wednesday violated the constitution and that authorities had opened a criminal inquiry against its founders.

The council members have rejected the accusations and insist

their actions fully comply with Belarusian law.

European Union leaders on Wednesday expressed solidarity with the protesters in Belarus and said they were preparing sanctions against Belarusian officials responsible for alleged election fraud and for police brutality against protest participants.

During the first four days of protests, police detained almost 7,000 people and injured hundreds with rubber bullets, stun grenades and clubs. At least three protesters died.

The crackdown fueled massive outrage and swelled protesters' ranks, forcing authorities to change tactics and stop breaking



Sergei Gerts/AP

**Belarusian opposition supporters hold flowers and flash victory signs during a protest in Victory Square in Minsk, Belarus, on Thursday.**

up crowds that grew to an unprecedented 200,000 on Sunday.

After standing back for days, police again beefed up their presence on the streets of the capital

Wednesday, blocking access to some government buildings and also deploying in numbers outside factories where workers have been on strike since Monday.

## Bomber's brother gets 55 years for UK concert attack

Associated Press

LONDON — The brother of the suicide bomber who set off an explosion at a 2017 Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, England, killing 22 people and injuring hundreds, was sentenced Thursday to a minimum of 55 years in prison.

Hashem Abedi, 23, had denied helping plan the attack at Manchester Arena but was found guilty of murder, attempted murder, and conspiring to cause explosions. His sentencing had been postponed due to travel restrictions during the coronavirus pandemic.

His elder brother Salman Abedi, who set off the bomb, died in the May 22, 2017, attack at the end of the concert, as fans — including thousands of children and young people — were leaving the pop star's show.

Hashem Abedi refused to attend court for the two-day sen-

tencing hearing, which heard powerful testimony from the families of the victims.

Judge Jeremy Baker said that the two brothers were "equally culpable for the deaths and injuries caused by the explosion."

He added that there was a "significant degree of premeditation" and that the motivation for the brothers was "to advance the ideology of Islamism."

The brothers were born in Manchester to Libyan parents. They had traveled to Libya the month before the attack. Salman returned to the U.K. on May 18, 2017, when he finalized preparations for the attack. Hashem remained in Libya until he was extradited to Britain and arrested at a London airport last year.

Prosecutors say he played a key role in the attack, including ordering chemicals for the bomb and arranging transport for the materials.

## UK farmer tainted baby food for blackmail

Associated Press

LONDON — A sheep farmer in Britain has been found guilty of planting baby food faced with metal shards in stores as part of a plan to blackmail a supermarket chain.

Prosecutors said Nigel Wright, 45, contaminated jars of Heinz baby food between 2018 and February, and sent dozens of emails and letters to Tesco in a bid to extort 1.4 million pounds (\$1.84 million) in the online currency Bitcoin.

Wright claimed to be part of a group of farmers angry at the low price they were paid for the milk they sold.

Tesco had to recall about 42,000 jars of baby food after a mother reported discovering pieces of metal in one of the jars. A second mother later also came forward saying she made a similar discovery while feeding her 9-month-old.

Wright was caught on closed-circuit television planting one of the jars on a shelf, and was later

tracked down to his home, where police found photos of contaminated baby food on his laptop. Officers also recovered about 100,000 pounds in Bitcoin that had been sent by undercover officers during the investigation.

A jury found him guilty of two counts of contaminating goods and three counts of blackmail.

A judge said Wright appeared to have a mental disorder and asked for a psychiatric report to be prepared ahead of his sentencing, expected in September.

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## FACES



PHOTOS BY FREEFORM/AP

Gil Bellows, left, and Rya Kihlstedt in a scene from "Love in the Time of Corona," a four-part miniseries airing Aug. 22-23 on Freeform.

# Capturing the moment

## 'Love in the Time of Corona' is a 'time capsule' in four parts

By ALICIA RANCILO  
Associated Press

**F**rom grappling with big life decisions to a marriage on the brink, a new four-part miniseries tackles relationship struggles during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leslie Odom Jr. and Nicolette Robinson, who are married in real life, co-star and executive produce "Love in the Time of Corona," which airs this weekend stateside. The title is a take on the 1986 novel by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, "Love in the Time of Cholera."

Filming took place in the actors' actual homes, and costars are either related or close friends. Cameras were operated remotely, and the cast did their own hair and makeup.

The safety precautions alone weren't enough for Odom and Robinson to want to take the project on. They have a toddler, so turning their home into a set needed to be worth it.

"What we didn't want to do is just tell a story about a couple that was trying to have a baby. It's, they're trying to have a baby in the middle of a pandemic, in the middle of the Black Lives Matter movement and how that is affecting their relationship," said Odom.

Another actor couple, Gil Bellows and Rya Kihlstedt, play a secretly separated husband and wife forced to quarantine together when their adult daughter (portrayed by their daughter, Ava Bellows) moves back home.

"We were the first family and first house to film, so we were truly the guinea pigs," Kihlstedt said. "We were stop No. 1. But it was

amazing. It was like a little indie film, and everybody does whatever job there is that needs doing. I love that."

L. Scott Caldwell plays out the challenges of a woman physically separated from her husband because he's in a nursing home, which elevates the safety precautions.

"No one could come into my house. Any air that I breathe could not be breathed by someone on the very, very, very small crew. So if somebody had to come in to make an adjustment, I had to leave and then come back in," Caldwell said. "After a while, you just sort of forgot that you were doing anything unnatural."

Tommy Dorfman plays a non-binary stylist alongside Rainey Qualley's aspiring musician. They're close friends and sometimes more — and during the pandemic they start to realize how their codependency isn't healthy. Dorfman says having the crew at a distance actually made things go quicker.

"We weren't getting touched all the time and adjusted all the time, and we didn't have time to take a lot of breaks between scenes. We were moving at a really fun pace, and it just allowed us to play and be in the moment," said Dorfman.

As Hollywood plots out ways to resume working in the U.S., Bellows hopes the miniseries serves as an example of how it can be done.

"We have a time capsule miniseries of being some of the first people on the planet to execute a story in this time. And I think that's great," Bellows said. "My hope is it's not the way we have to do everything for much longer. But I think it's an important



Nicolette Robinson, left, and Leslie Odom Jr. are one of the four couples in "Love in the Time of Corona."

little piece of history, not only for audiences but also for other filmmakers to look at and see, 'OK. These are ways we can overcome the challenges that we're facing in order to tell the stories we want to tell.'"

"Love in the Time of Corona" debuts its first two episodes Saturday on Freeform, with the second two airing Sunday. The episodes will drop on Hulu the day after they air.

## Cast of Netflix's 'Pinocchio' film announced

The cast for Netflix's new "Pinocchio" film has been chosen.

The streaming service announced Wednesday that newcomer Gregory Mann will assume the title role along with Ewan McGregor as Cricket and David Bradley as Geppetto. Oscar winner Guillermo del Toro will direct the stop-motion animated musical.

"After years of pursuing this dream project, I found my perfect partner in Netflix," del Toro said in a statement. "We have spent a long time curating a remarkable cast and crew and have been blessed by continuous support from Netflix to quietly and carefully soldier on, barely missing a beat."

Other cast members include Oscar winners Christoph Waltz, Tilda Swinton and Cate Blanchett. Finn Wolfhard, John Turturro, Tim Blake Nelson and Golden Globe winner Ron Perlman will have roles in the film.

The story will be set during the rise of fascism in Mussolini's Italy. The film is set to debut in theaters and on Netflix.

## DC FanDome now 2 separate events

DC's virtual fan event will now take place over two separate weekends.

On Wednesday, DC announced that DC FanDome has been expanded into two separate events — DC FanDome: Hall of Heroes and DC FanDome: Explore the Multiverse.

Originally scheduled as a single, 24-hour celebration of everything DC this weekend, the new format will allow fans to experience more of the 100-plus hours of programming that was previously announced. Overall, DC FanDome will feature more than 300 guests from DC's films, television shows, comic books, video games and more.

The full programming slate for both dates, which will take place at DCFanDome.com, is available at the site.

## Kamala Harris picture book coming Aug. 25

Just weeks after making history as the running mate for Democratic nominee Joe Biden, Sen. Kamala Harris will be the subject of a new picture book.

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing announced Wednesday that prize-winning author Nikki Grimes has written "Kamala Harris: Rooted in Justice," which features illustrations by Laura Freeman. The book comes out Aug. 25.

Harris, a California Democrat, is the first Black woman and first Asian American woman named to a major party presidential ticket. Later on Wednesday, she was scheduled to accept her nomination at the Democratic National Convention.

Compiled from wire services



# WEEKEND



'Move It' and the  
best bad dance films

Movies, Page 19

## WILD *about* CARDS



The first in the  
now-crowded field  
of collectible  
card games, Magic:  
The Gathering  
has retained its  
immense popularity

Lifestyle,  
Pages 20-21



# WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY



WALT DISNEY PICTURES/AP

New LED video wall technology such as that used in Disney's live-action "The Lion King" movie could be used by Hollywood filmmakers trying to resume production amid pandemic-related restrictions.

## Becoming productive again

### New LED wall tech helps Hollywood get back to work

By JOHN CARUCCI  
Associated Press

New LED video wall technology used in making last year's "The Lion King" and "The Mandalorian" series could become more widespread as Hollywood production ramps back up during the pandemic.

Instead of shooting on location with a full cast and crew and navigating stringent social distancing requirements, it allows filmmakers on a studio lot to spread out individual scenes captured virtually using a variety of techniques.

Unlike a traditional "green screen," the actor can see the background and cinematographers can match perspectives and camera parallax to look like a location shoot.

"The Lion King" visual effects supervisor Robert Legato calls the video wall and move toward virtual production a "game changer" that's being embraced by necessity during the pandemic.

"It is something that was going to happen anyway. It just would have taken longer because there would be no need for it immediately. Some people, you know, are stuck in their ways," the three-time Oscar winner said.

More than half of "The Mandalorian" scenes were filmed with the technology. Emmy-winning visual effects specialist Sam Nicholson says it represents a "natural evolution" in the Hollywood effects world, where new technologies have been embraced after past crises — including a clampdown on travel after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

"We started taking shows like 'ER,' 'Grey's Anatomy' and 'Walking Dead' and saying, 'Look, we don't have to be on location to actually shoot there.' It's easier to bring the location to the production than the production of a location," Nicholson said.

He believes the pandemic will move "everything" from the Cecil B. DeMille era where Hollywood is "real" and going to more of a George Lucas era.

"If you're a producer, can you really afford to have your entire crew and actors go and be quar-

antined for two weeks before you start shooting?" he said.

Film production is just one of many industries that have had to adapt so people can go back to work in person.

The "Avatar" sequels that recently resumed filming in New Zealand are also using virtual camera systems.

"We've been helping the 'Avatar' folks for a while," said Dave Hoffman of Blackmagic, an Australian company that makes cameras and video production hardware.

Director Thea Sharrock had to rely on virtual production to finish her latest film, Disney's "The One and Only Ivan," and she found the process "peculiar."

"We had one extra element that we had to do with music that we had to deal with via Zoom, which was extraordinary and weird and peculiar not being in the room with people," Sharrock said. She added: "Doing what we do is all about collaboration. It's all about being in a room with people, and that's how you get the work done. That's how you push projects forward. So, it's very, very peculiar."

Nicholson shares a similar feeling. While he understands that these technologies can help resume production during the pandemic, he doesn't see it as a complete substitute for returning to a normal workflow.

"It does represent a fundamental change in production towards the virtual realm where anything is possible. But by saying anything is possible, you still have to put the story up front. You still have to put the acting up front and use it as a supportive tool to put the wrapping on the story," Nicholson said.

Still, virtual production can provide a viable solution during the pandemic, and perhaps become a useful production technique moving forward.

Actor Joseph Gordon-Levitt, who stars in the new Netflix film "Project Power," agrees: "It's about sort of finding a good pairing between the tech you're using and the story you're trying to tell," he said.

## GADGET WATCH

### Hours of wireless sound

By GREGG ELLMAN  
Tribune News Service

Before I even opened my package from LinearFlux, my familiarity with the company led me to assume that their products would be outstanding.

LinearFlux is a California start-up built with solid experience. Founders David Leung and Einstein Galang might not be household names, but many are familiar with their innovative engineering and design prowess through their work at Monster Products.

The products they sent me for testing this time are the Hypersonic true wireless in-ear speakers and a multi-functional Hypercharger Max 100 watt, 20,800 mAh portable USB battery for testing.

Both were delivered in colorful, animated, fun, easy-to-read packages. Great packaging doesn't mean the product will be top of the line, but in this instance, it was true. Earbuds and battery both worked to perfection.

The sound from the headphones is great, driven by LinearFlux DL01 Immersive Sound Engine tuned to popular HD streaming services by Apple Music, Spotify and Pandora.

The HyperSonic True wireless audio experience is designed to give users the "Best Bang for your Boom," according to the website. For \$99.99, you definitely get that.

I immediately loved that you can play just one earbud. Many, if not most, of today's true wireless earbuds are built with auto play, which is a great feature. Take one earbud out and the music or video stops, which in most cases is what you want. However, when I'm lying on my side, I like to use just one earbud. With the Hypersonic, it's possible to do that with either ear.

The Hypersonic comes complete with a wireless charging case, or you can use the included USB-C to USB-A charging cable. Fit and appearance — the speakers are a colorful acid-green and stealth-black — are also top-notch. Each package includes sport ear hooks, comfort ear shells and three sets of pillow-soft ear-tips. With all that, I guarantee you'll get a comfortable fit.

They have a built-in microphone for hands-free calls. Bluetooth 5.0 technology and are IPX7 water resistant. The rechargeable earbuds are good for up to 6-8 hours of playtime per charge and the charging case gives you an additional 20 hours.

Each earbud has one-touch access to Alexa,



Sol Republic

#### Sol Republic Soundtrack Pro

Google Now or Siri.

The HyperCharger MAX portable USB battery (\$799.99) with an ultra-black premium metal finish does everything you would want from a portable battery.

Obviously it charges portable USB devices, but the versatility of charging up to three at once makes it top notch.

It's built with a pair of USB-A outputs, a single USB-C in/out, and a microUSB input for charging the battery itself. Auto-detect circuitry will start charging once you're plugged in, and Tesla-type battery cell technology keeps it charging safely.

Online: [linearflux.mysophify.com](http://linearflux.mysophify.com)

I've had the Sol Republic Soundtrack Pro ANC headphones sitting here on my shelf to review for a little longer than normal, but they are definitely worth the wait.

The Bluetooth 5.0 wireless headphones have an adjustable headband with super comfortable ear cushions to rest on the outside of your ears. You'll get an amazing 32 hours of battery life before a USB-C charge is needed.

When you get them playing, the powerful crystal-clear sound with active noise cancellation to block the ambient noise is a perfect combination for tuning out the world and staying in the music mode.

I typically test headphones like these while flying, but conditions have kept me on the ground, so I ventured out with them (and a mask) during a recent grocery store run. These kept me in my own little world, not only didn't I pay attention to anyone, the only sounds I heard were from my iPhone Pandora playlist, along with a touch of ambient sounds around me.

Along with the strong, deep bass sound, the Soundtrack Pro headphones have an excellent appearance even when they are just around your neck. They are available in gray, black and champagne colors with a matching color fabric over the 40 mm drivers.

Online: [solrepublic.com](http://solrepublic.com); \$199.99

It is something that was going to happen anyway. It just would have taken longer because there was no need for it immediately.

Robert Legato

Visual effects supervisor for 'The Lion King'

ON THE COVER: Claire Bao displays the cards she purchased at a Magic: The Gathering event.

PARKER MICHELS-BOYCE/Special to The Washington Post



## WEEKEND: MOVIES

**'Center Stage' (2000)**

OK, fine, we saved the best for first. What sets "Center Stage" apart is simple: Everyone can actually move. Unlike so many dance movies that lead with an actress who can barely two-step, this cult classic is chock-full of actual dancers. Loosely based on Manhattan's School of American Ballet, the movie follows a dozen young hopefuls as they leap toward greatness — and pursue wildly inappropriate relationships (we're looking at you, Jody and Cooper). And it gave the world Zoe Saldana, a former ballerina herself, and the most bourgeoisie comeback ever: "I am the best g-d-- dancer in the American Ballet Academy. Who the hell are you? Nobody." (Stream on Amazon Prime)

**'Save the Last Dance' (2001)**

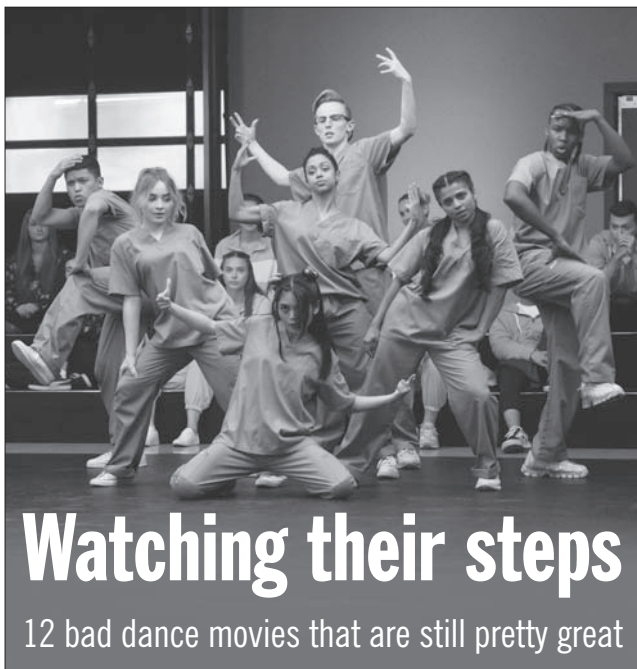
A ballerina and B-boy. A white girl from the suburbs and a Black kid from Chi-town. "Save the Last Dance" is a Romeo and Juliet plus "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" fairy tale rolled into one. Julia Stiles' character, Sara, is forced to live with her estranged father in the "inner city" after her mother dies in a car crash while rushing to attend Sara's Juilliard audition. Need less to say the girl is traumatized. Enter Derek, a straight-A student on his way to Georgetown, who teaches Sara how to put some "S-E-X in those H-I-P-S." But that's hardly the film's most enduring quote. That award goes to Kerry Washington, in her first major role as Derek's sister, Chanelle, who approves, disapproves and then approves of his interracial relationship with Sara. "You can't help who you love, Derek; you're not supposed to," she says wistfully. (Stream on HBO Max)

**'Honey' (2003)**

A curly-haired Jessica Alba stars in this Cinderella story as a bartending dancer with big dreams of being a music-video choreographer. Crop tops, 20-year-old lingo and hoop earrings abound as Alba's character, Honey, climbs her way to the top only to be brought down by an evil video director. There's also a subplot starring Lil' Romeo as a troubled youth caught up in "the streets." Eventually, Honey figures out that fame and fortune aren't worth it. Come for the 2000s nostalgia, stay for the Missy Elliott cameo. (Stream via Hulu's Starz add-on or rent on Amazon Prime)

**'You Got Served' (2004)**

Is there a plot to this movie? Does it matter? Some dance movies need a story line to hang on to, but "You Got Served" isn't one of them. The reason to watch is for the cool dance crew battles, which play like an endless YouTube bing session. Written and directed by Chris Stokes, the music manager behind music groups B2K and Immature, the movie does what a good bad dance movie should: Give the audience great moves, including random popping and locking scenes in the rain because why not. (Stream on Amazon Prime)



# Watching their steps

## 12 dance movies that are still pretty great

By HELENA ANDREWS-DYER  
The Washington Post

**P**icture it: an upright bookworm meets a bad boy from the wrong side of the tracks. After a sweaty montage of studio sessions, Boy teaches Girl how "to feel the music" — and follow her heart. Before the credits roll, our two-stepping lovers have won the big competition, or check, or college admission, and all is right with the world. The end.

That's basically the premise of every so-bad-it's-good dance movie ever made. What is a good "bad" dance movie, you ask? Well, "West Side Story" it ain't. Instead, cha-cha on over to "Work It," Netflix's newest offering to the incredibly entertaining subgenre. In it, a classic overachiever with the rhythm of a robot must assemble a hodgepodge dance team in a matter of weeks to win a dance competition that

will then guarantee her admission into Duke University. This plot is completely acceptable.

The dialogue cedes the floor to the dancing. The first kiss always comes after a slow, sensual dip. The romance is based solely on the opposites-attract premise. And the line, "I've never seen dancing like that before!" is in there somewhere.

Sure, the acting is off, critics universally pan them and the dancing can be just so-so, but the category endures because there is still something so great about the completely nonsensical yet formulaic comfort of a good bad dance movie. And yes, while some of the films below are eye-roll-inducing and others are genuinely entertaining, let's face it: None of them ever stood a chance on an Oscars shortlist.

Presented here, in chronological order, are a few of the genre's best available for streaming.

**'Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights' (2004)**

When you mix Cuban salsa (aka Casino) with politics and racial injustice, you get "Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights." The film is loosely based on the life of its producer, choreographer JoAnn Jansen, who moved to the Caribbean island's capital in the 1950s. The fish-out-of-water tale follows Katey (Romola Garai), a bored American teen with a brain, and Javier (Diego Luna), a waiter at the fancy hotel she lives in, as they practice for the big salsa competition. Meanwhile, the world as they know it is imploding while Javier tries to get Katey to "feel the music."

Patrick Swayze makes a surprising cameo, but there's a reason "Havana Nights" is on this list and the original "Dirty Dancing" is not. (Stream on Hulu)

**'Step Up' (2006)**

Five years after "Save the Last Dance," "Step Up" reinvigorated the B-boy meets ballerina story line with two actual dancers and a onetime, real-life couple, but that came later. Channing Tatum stars as Tyler, a troublemaker with a dancer's heart who is forced to do community service at a "Fame"-like high school in Baltimore where Jenna Dewan's Nora just so happens to be looking for a new partner. You know what happens next.

The "Fast and the Furious" of the genre, "Step Up" sparked not one, not two, but four film sequels based on the premise that dancing changes lives. (Rent to stream on Amazon Prime)

**'Take the Lead' (2006)**

If "Dangerous Minds" and "Sister Act" had a baby, it would be "Take the Lead." The film stars Antonio Banderas as a salsa teacher who volunteers to teach some "inner-city youths" about ballroom dancing. The cast (which includes "Step Up's" Dewan) eventually learns to meld hip-hop and ballroom and, yeah, go figure — there's a competition to be won. (Stream on HBO Max)

**'Work It' is the dance film genre's latest, but probably not greatest, offering.**

Netflix

**'Stomp the Yard' (2007)**

This is actor Columbus Short's opus. An ode to Black Greek-lettered organizations' history of stopping and the legacy of historically Black universities, "Stomp the Yard" is a film about redemption. After his brother — played by a fresh-faced Chris Brown — is murdered (another cliché of the genre) at a dance crew battle gone wrong, Short's character, DJ, goes away to college to get out of trouble. Once there, DJ falls in with a different crew — a fraternity — and struggles with following the "played" steps. The film puts the stepping art form front and center. (Rent to stream on Amazon Prime)

**'How She Move' (2008)**

The mid-2000s were clearly a boom time for these films. Exhibit A is "How She Move," a reverse "My Fair Lady" in which Raya, a pre-"True Blood" Rutina Wesley, is forced out of her private school and dropped back into the local run-down neighborhood high school. She manages to stomp onto a crew of steppers as the only girl. Of course, there is a competition and a huge prize and, yes, she needs the money for college. (Stream on Tubi or Pluto TV)

**'Magic Mike' (2012)**

Channing Tatum is back in a dance movie that is light on the sweetness and heavy on the half-naked men. With "Magic Mike" (and its 2015 follow-up, "Magic Mike XXL"), the genre took a sharp turn off the Disney-fied, teen rom-com rails. Drawing from his real-life experiences as a male exotic dancer, the film follows Tatum as Mike, who is funding his furniture-making dreams with ones and fives from the strip club. Also: Matthew McConaughey stars as Dallas, the den mother of Mike's ragtag group of stripper pals. (Stream on HBO Max)

**'Step Sisters' (2018)**

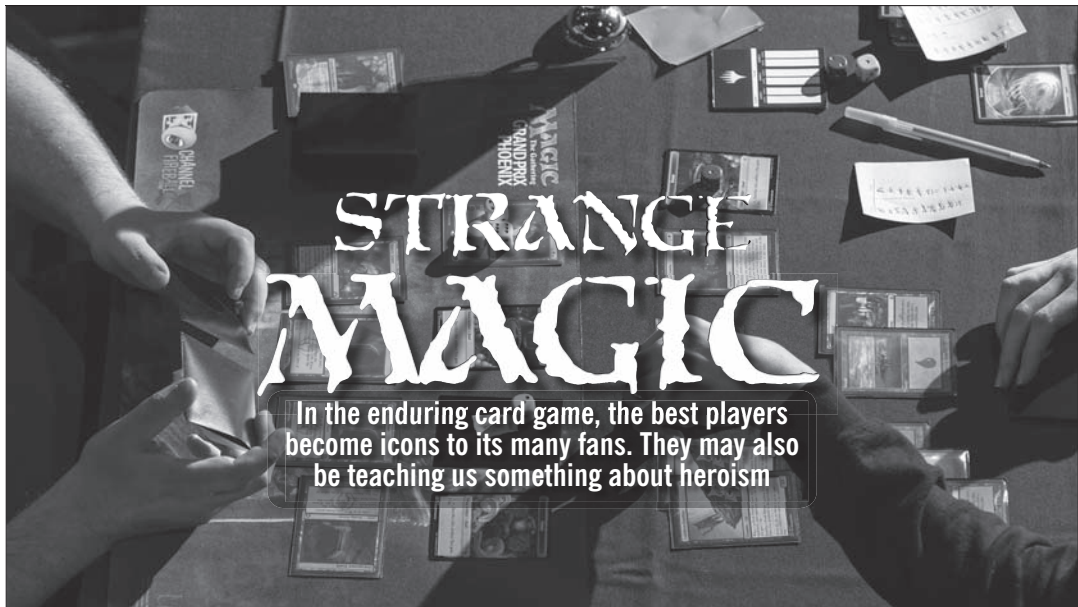
"Step Sisters" is "Stomp the Yard," with a little bit of the racial overtones of "Save the Last Dance." Jamilah (Megaly Echi-kunwoke) is the president of a Black sorority who has her sights set on Harvard Law School. Another sorority on campus has a PR problem, and the school's dean "guarantees" Jamilah's admission if she can get the other girls into a stepping competition. (Stream on Netflix)

**'Work It' (2020)**

"According to my research of every dance movie ever made, we have a very important ingredient for winning: a can-do spirit," announces Quinn (Sabrina Carpenter), a type-A high school senior trying to — you guessed it — get into the college of her dreams in "Work It." Her eventual love interest and the would-be coach of her dance team, Jake (Jordan Fisher), replies: "That's, uh, not how dance works." But it is how good dance movies work. (Stream on Netflix)



## WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE



**In the enduring card game, the best players become icons to its many fans. They may also be teaching us something about heroism**

BY GAVIN EDWARDS  
Special to The Washington Post

Nine months ago, I went on a road trip to Richmond to see hundreds of people try to win \$50,000 by playing a card game about swamps and elk and math. But the whole way there, I kept thinking about heroes.

We've often been uncomfortable with heroes — the book "A Hero Ain't Nothin' But a Sandwich" dates to 1973 — but in an era when the world needed them more than ever, they seemed to be in short supply. Too many men — writers, actors, Founding Fathers — whom I had once believed to be worthy of admiration instead lay somewhere on the continuum between flawed human beings and bipedal Superfund sites.

In the immensely popular card game *Magic: The Gathering*, however, heroism is often distilled to its traditional essence: virtuous men and women going on quests to defeat unambiguously evil creatures like *Massacre Wurm*s and *Rune-Scarred Demons*. I wanted to learn about the culture of the game and how it had managed to thrive a quarter-century after its debut, but I hoped that while I was there I might figure out some things about heroes, too.

In the months that followed, we entered a different world, where a handshake became a distant memory. When I thought of the crowded rooms that were an unremarkable part of life before the coronavirus pandemic, I remembered sweaty rock clubs, Greek restaurants, NBA arenas. But one building felt more like a dream than any of those: the Greater Richmond Convention Center, where nearly 500 men and women paired off in rows of card tables placed in a tight grid that looked as if it might extend to the horizon.

On a Friday morning in November, I was standing near one match, far enough away to give the players some space, but closer than six feet. I was watching two men locked in one-on-one combat, as ritualized in *Magic: The Gathering*. Their weapons were colorful playing cards. There were dozens of them on the table,

including Paradise Druid; Beanstalk Giant; and Oko, Thief of Crowns, a trickster hero who can transform other creatures into elk. The tactical situation was complicated; both men stared intently at the cards, as if an unblinking gaze might improve them.

Lee Shi Tian and Logan Nettles were competing for a half-million-dollar prize pool in a Mythic Championship, one in a series of big-money Magic: The Gathering tournaments that in 2019 took place in London, Barcelona — and Richmond. It was a full convention hall, but a smidgen of players compared with the 40 million people who have played Magic since it went on sale in 1993 (according to the game's publisher, Wizards of the Coast).

Nettles — then 31 years old, from Santa Ynez, Calif. — was wearing a black T-shirt with the words "Pro Tour" printed on it. Lee — age 32, from Hong Kong — had a gaudy fuchsia scarf around his neck. Neither of them spoke. Then Lee abruptly made a decision, quickly turning some of his cards to indicate an attack. Nettles considered the play for a moment and decided his position was hopeless. Shaking Lee's hand, he resigned the match.

After Lee gathered his cards and departed, Nettles told me quietly, "He's a high-profile player, a Hall of Fame guy. I'm a tier below." (Magic does have an official Hall of Fame, honoring 48 of its greatest competitors.) Nettles had played enough matches against the world's best Magic players to assess his abilities vs. theirs: "I make a mistake in three percent of the games, they might make a mistake in one percent, and that's the difference in a tournament." One minute you're a hero; the next minute, you're a goat. Or in this case, an elk.

In 2019, Wizards provided 32 top players with sponsorship contracts worth \$75,000 and, almost as important, gave them automatic invitations to major tour-

naments. Nettles wasn't in that tier, but he had played well enough at Magic tournaments to get a sponsorship from a company that makes protective card sleeves, allowing him to play the game for a living.

Even subcultures like Magic have celebrities and influencers and heroes, and the boundaries between those figures often get blurry. A hero can be somebody who does the things that other people can't, whether that's pitching a perfect game, leading a political movement or saving a life. But here's the great magic trick of heroes: They inspire other people to unprecedented achievements of their own. However, since heroes teach the world that impossible feats are possible, their accomplishments can feel like a reproach: Why aren't you doing the extraordinary yourself? Heroism seems more manageable when confined to a deck of cards.

## Uncovering Magic

Players in Magic are rival sorcerers, playing cards that represent spells. Some produce arcane effects, others summon mystical beasts — all are designed to damage the opponent. A player begins with 20 points, called “life,” and wins by reducing the opponent to zero.

The great innovation of game inventor Richard Garfield, one that Wizards patented, was that players assembled their own decks from packs of cards that they could buy as if they were baseball cards. This proved to be a brilliant economic model, encouraging players in search of an elusive card to keep buying packs. It was also a breakthrough in game design: A lot of the strategy comes from how players construct their decks before play starts, finding clever synergies between cards.

Magic was the first game in a new genre, called collectible card games or trading card games. In the decade after it debuted in 1993, there were dozens of competitors, with themes ranging from

Hong Kong action movies to warring vampires. Most of those games have fallen by the wayside (Pokemon is a notable exception), but Magic is bigger than ever. Wizards of the Coast prints cards in 11 languages, more than 20 billion cards between 2008 and 2016. The game has released 20,886 different cards in more than 100 expansion sets, gradually detailing its own fantasy multiverse with decades' worth of adventures and dozens of tie-in novels. ("War of the Spark: Ravnica" debuted at No. 5 on the New York Times bestseller list in May 2019.)

Explaining the setting of *Magic*, Jeremy Jarvis, franchise creative director at Wizards, told me, "It's a twist on the known superhero genre, where the heroes, the denizens, are powered by magic rather than mutations or technology."

On a cold November morning, the magical planes of Ravnica and Dominaria felt very far away from the yellow cinder-block walls of Exhibit Hall A, but so did Hong Kong, the home of Lee Shi Tian. Lee still had a long way to go to get his visa position as an accountant. He told me that the prize money he had earned from Magic — \$222,195 lifetime — didn't necessarily validate his choice to pursue the game, but it had assuaged his family's concerns that he was squandering his life. "Gaming is not a popular job in Hong Kong," he said. "I was the only person in my family common in the United States either, he laughed. Then he said: "What I'm trying to do is use my name in the gaming industry to tell people what is happening in Hong Kong. The police are abusing their power more and more. They are arresting people for no reason. Hong Kong is a well-developed place and it should be like that. We should have freedom of speech."

At home, Lee had long been active in the city's democracy movement. He was aware, however, that his outspoken support for Hong Kong's independence from China risked government reprisals and might cost him his Magic career: "Every time I leave Hong Kong for tournaments, I think ... hmmm, maybe next time I will not be able to get past customs."

**Magic: The Gathering** players face off at the Mythic Championship VI tournament at the Greater Richmond Convention Center in Richmond, Va., in November.

PARKER MICHELS-BOYCE/For The Washington Post

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# WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

## FROM PAGE 20

Lee's opponent for his sixth-round match was Andrew Cuneo. All the players in the convention hall knew that over the course of 16 Magic duels, they couldn't afford to lose more than three or four matches. (Matches are best of three games.) Making it to Sunday, when only eight players remain, would be a major accomplishment for any of them. Cuneo had been playing Magic for 25 years and was revered as one of the game's masterminds. "But I haven't gotten to play on Sunday in 20 years," he said.

He started playing Magic in 1993, as an undergraduate at Carnegie Mellon, and took some time off from the game to work as a computer programmer and play in weekend rock groups. "We were hobbyists that wanted to take it seriously but never really got there," Cuneo said of his hands while chatting between matches. "For a lot of people, this game is a hobby that they want to be able to take seriously, and I get to actually do it." The aspirational appeal of the Magic pro circuit — the idea that you can ascend from playing the game on Friday nights at your local card shop to traveling the world for major competitions — is why Wizards of the Coast spends millions on the Mythic Championship tournaments.

Cuneo, 44 and living in Philadelphia, had recently grown disenchanted with his job and fallen back into professional Magic. "This isn't a great way to earn money, but it's been good enough and it's gotten a lot better lately," he said. "Sometimes I do think, 'Wow, this is weird that this is what I'm doing with my life,' but to succeed, you have to throw yourself into it."

**Magic:** The Gathering releases new sets of tournament-eligible cards four times a year, regularly rotating old cards out of official play. That means strategies are constantly in flux, and the "metagame" historically has evolved as players discover dominant new deck archetypes and then develop countermeasures.

In addition to Lee, a handful of other prominent players had used their Magic success to draw attention to issues: Craig Wescoe promoted veganism, while Autumn Burchett advocated for transgender rights. The game is also a sort of act of civil disobedience: By turning a small piece of cardboard 90 degrees, players can symbolically send a Dawnstrike Paladin on a quest to battle an Acid-Spewer Dragon. That didn't inspire Magic players to run into burning buildings, of course, but it aimed to draw attention to the language of heroism and quests.

What earns Magic pros the respect of their peers is, basically, good manners: treating opponents politely, signing cards and play mats for fans no matter how weird that feels, and passing on advice to other players. Magic can be a complicated game, so new players are grateful for anyone who helps them crack the code. The world-saving scope of Magic's fictional environment, it turned out, scaled down to the human proportions of being decent to the people around you.



PHOTOS BY PARKER MICHELS-BOYCE/For The Washington Post

**Lee Shi Tian of Hong Kong is a Hall of Fame player and is active in Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement.**

Brad Nelson, a 33-year-old from Renton, Wash., generally acclaimed as the world's best player in the Standard format, said: "At first the game was just metrics to me. If I gain X amount of clout, I can turn that into a writing gig with a website for supplementary income." His perspective changed when he designed a deck that some players used to qualify for an event on the Magic Pro Tour. A stranger on a Dublin street who had never qualified for a tournament before thanked him in tears, Nelson said. "That changed my perspective on the reach I have," he recalled. He started thinking about what he could give to the game, not just what he could get from it.

Does offering a friendly word or holding the elevator door make you a hero? Or does that render the word "hero" meaningless? I wrote an entire book about Mister Rogers — a hero for many people — and learned that the foundation of his heroism was simply that he cared profoundly about the welfare of children and did everything he could to communicate that love to them. Not everybody can be Fred Rogers all the time, but if everybody indulged in an act of kindness two or three times a day, maybe we could be fostering an army of part-time heroes. Given its reach, could Magic help?

### Competition heats up

On Saturday morning, 304 survivors returned to the Richmond convention hall, most of them

young men. Jessica Estephan, the first woman to win a Magic Grand Prix tournament, confided that she used to walk into big tournaments like this, count the women competing and end up with maybe three, tops. Now? "I need more than two hands, and that just blows my mind and I love it."

Andrew Cuneo, who has been playing Magic since its beginning, said: "When I started, it was almost entirely people who were college age, maybe a little bit of high school age. It's still predominantly white guys, but it's gotten broader, for sure."

Every round of the tournament, eight players were summoned to showcase tables so their matches could get broadcast on Twitch, via an array of 10 cameras. Mythic Championships typically draw 500,000 to 750,000 unique viewers over a weekend, with a peak audience for tabletop matches around 25,000 to 30,000 watching at the same time.

A casual game of Magic will likely contain a fair amount of trash talk and good-natured banter, but at the tournament, the top players operated in near silence, impassively flipping cards. This was partially because of Bushido code where players tried not to show up their opponents, and partially because there's an element of bluffing in Magic.

Lee lost two of his first three matches of the day. He was tired and distracted, he explained, having spent the previous night checking on news from Hong



**Judge Toby Elliott monitors players at the tournament in Richmond.**

Kong instead of sleeping.

Players' fortunes rose and fell as the day progressed. Round 16 looked to be somewhat anticlimactic, because many of the leaders were far enough ahead of the field that they didn't need to win.

Then there were murmurs and gasps from the spectators surrounding Table No. 1. Austin Bursavich, a 27-year-old from Houston, was at the top of the standings and would make the top eight after the match — win, lose or draw. His opponent, however, Paulo Vitor Damo da Rosa, was in fifth and needed a win or a draw. Damo da Rosa, a 32-year-old from Porto Alegre, Brazil, expected to be offered a draw and to move on to the top eight. But Bursavich announced that he wanted to play the game, shocking the crowd. Bursavich's logic: He wanted to maximize his chances of winning the tournament, which would mean a \$50,000 check and an invitation to the upcoming world championship. Since Damo da Rosa was not only the best player left in contention, but arguably the best player in the world, Bursavich reasoned that it behooved him to knock him out preemptively if he could.

Damo da Rosa won the first game in quick order — at which point Bursavich surprised him again, by relenting and offering him the draw, which he quickly accepted. "I felt bad," Bursavich said. "If I beat Paulo, it becomes a big story. He shouldn't have any hard feelings. ..." he reasoned. He trailed off, knowing that the aggressive maneuver hadn't made him any friends. If you're an unknown trying to take out a hero, then you have to be ready for people to think of you as a villain.

### Looking ahead

On Sunday morning, most of the rows of tables were cleared to make room for a couple of large video screens that would broadcast the matches, placed far enough from the players that audience reactions wouldn't tip them off about what card an opponent was holding.

Damo da Rosa defeated Cuneo. Bursavich, meanwhile, lost his own quarterfinal match, so he never got to test the wisdom of whether he should have tried to knock out Damo da Rosa.

The cheerful Brazilian advanced to the final, where he lost to the 24-year-old Ondřej Stráský — a Czech player who had periodically announced his

retirement from Magic, always reconsidering after he did well at a tournament. Stráský told me that he would be heading home to Prague, where he planned to consume as much beer as possible. The victory in Richmond changed his plans for the next few years. "I'm going to play Magic full time," he said.

In February, Stráský, Damo da Rosa and 14 other players competed for the Magic world championship at a tournament in Honolulu. Damo da Rosa won, giving him a legitimate claim to be one of the best Magic players ever. Weeks later, in-person Magic largely ended, both at the amateur level (most game shops closed) and at the professional level (gathering hundreds of people for a tournament seemed foolhardy); the game migrated, at least temporarily, online.

As COVID-19 permeated American society, new ideas about who qualified as a hero took hold. Medical workers, risking their lives to treat the ill despite a conscience-shocking shortage of masks and other personal protective equipment, seemed like obvious candidates for hero status. In cities around the world, the quarantined population opened their windows every night and sang or banged on pans, celebrating doctors, nurses and other first responders.

Soon enough, people pointed out that our pandemic heroes included grocery-store workers, delivery people and anyone else who needed to leave the house to do their jobs. Heroes are people who do what other people can't.

— but calling unpaid workers heroes sometimes looked like a way to avoid paying them or getting them sufficient PPE gear instead of taking inspiration from them.

For me, the heroism of Magic seemed more meaningful every day: not the grand mythic gesture, but the accumulated moments of courtesy and decency, and the knowledge of the players that they were part of a subculture — which was another word for a society. As the pandemic wore on, and then the protests sprung up after the killing of George Floyd, I found myself feeling differently about larger-than-life heroes, and not just because so many revered men had proved to be so flawed.

I wanted a world where untold millions of people did heroic things, and I hoped that desire wasn't just a childish longing for magic.


## WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

STUMBLE  
AND BRAWL

Fall Guys: Ultimate Knockout is a delightful take on battle royale

By ELISE FAVIS  
The Washington Post

I don't normally laugh when I die in a video game. Usually, my untimely demise is met with frustration. But in Fall Guys: Ultimate Knockout, I'm left in stitches whenever my poor jelly bean-shaped character is bonked by an aggressively circling hammer, or trampled by a stampede of players. With each failure, I can't help but appreciate the ridiculous situation and the wholesome experience. I quickly queue up another match to join the turbulent fun once more.



Released on Aug. 4 for PlayStation 4 and PC, Fall Guys is a battle royale game unlike any I've ever played (and that's great, considering the genre rarely strays from the norm). Yes, you're still facing off against others in hopes of being the last one standing, but "Fall Guys" swaps guns for silly minigames akin to Mario Party. Pitting you against 59 others, you complete frenzied challenges, some competitive, others cooperative. With every

passing round, minigames are randomized and a slew of players are eliminated, narrowing the batch until a final trial. If you're disqualified, you can continue spectating, which is often just as amusing as playing.

Fall Guys doesn't take itself seriously, and that's one of the best things about it. You waddle, trip and tumble your way to victory in a vibrant world of obstacle courses and arenas, primed with brightly colored gym mats, pools of pink slime and teetering seesaws.



Mediatonic photos

**Fall Guys: Ultimate Knockout flings hordes of players together online in a mad dash of escalating chaos until one victor remains.**

Each minigame has a wildly entertaining premise, revolving around platforming, luck or teamwork. You navigate through different trials, attempting to reach a finish line or meet an objective. For example, in Gate Crash, you bash into a series of real and fake doors alongside a swarm of players, all hoping to find the correct path to the finish line. Other times you're joining efforts to push a ball down an incline as an opposing team attempts the same, or picking tails off opponents' backsides in a clever twist of the classic game of tag.

Some minigames are in the form of ludicrous obstacle courses, similar to what you'd see in the television show "Wipeout." You avoid hindrances like closing gates, moving structures, or even oversteering fruit that tumbles down a mountain toward you. The game-play is complemented by wacky rag doll physics; your character goes flying after being hit by a spinning propeller, for example.

With 25 minigames, there's a good starting variety at launch, but Mediatonic, the game's developer, will have to continuously support the game to keep things fresh for longtime players. Thankfully, this

is something they're vowing to do with upcoming seasons.

Another area they'll need to monitor is server performance. The game ran without issues during two open beta sessions, but Fall Guys had a particularly rough launch day resulting in constant server disconnections, matchmaking interruptions and other errors. Mediatonic was overwhelmed by the popularity of the game, which skyrocketed to the top of Steam and Twitch charts immediately upon release. As a small team, Mediatonic is facing its share of challenges to accommodate the large player base. Hopefully, server stability is addressed promptly enough, because when this game works smoothly, there's a lot to enjoy.

Fall Guys has a steady progression system, where you can earn two forms of currency: crowns and kudos. These are used to buy cosmetics, like a pack of fast-food costumes, to swap your character into a french fries get-up. You can also unlock skins simply by playing the game, and the designs — like pirate attire or a rainbow tutu — are all delightfully whimsical.

Fall Guys is chaotic, and much of the fun comes from seeing

everyone struggling to make their way through a dense crowd or avoid getting pushed off platforms. Moments of unpredictability arise all the time: My favorites have revolved around last-minute turn-arounds, where I qualify to advance to the next round at the last second because of luck or a perfectly-timed move. Other times, uncertainty comes from the behaviors of others. If you're on a team, the rest of your group's performance makes or breaks your chances of moving on.

With no text or voice chat, you only have a number of emotes to communicate, unless you opt to set up a party chat via Discord or PlayStation Network. For a game focused on wholesome fun, this is an appreciated move, leaving little room for toxicity in a genre that often struggles to moderate harmful behavior.

That doesn't mean griefing doesn't exist in Fall Guys. The game isn't always fair. You can grab or be grabbed by others at any time; in some minigames, this is a vital maneuver to win, whereas in others, it can mean being unceremoniously shoved to your death regardless of your efforts. Some players camp out at a finish line to grab others before they can get through, and this can result in the captured player's elimination, preventing them from advancing to the following round.

Yet, these issues were never enough to distract from my overall positive experience. The entertainment in Fall Guys doesn't just come from winning. It's about laughing at your clumsiness as you trip over your own feet and as you learn from each defeat about how to best survive the next match. For a game that doesn't take itself seriously, it's hard to rage or let Fall Guys get the better of me. Seeing my character or my friends collapse, spin out of control and get launched into the air is just too much fun to pass up.

**Platforms:** PC, PlayStation 4  
**Online:** fallguys.com



## WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

## Europe

## ON THE QT

## DIRECTIONS

Located about 30 minutes south of Kaiserslautern, Germany. Search for Warmfreibad Trippstadt on GPS.

## TIMES

10 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily

## COSTS

Entry is 4.50 euros for adults and 2.50 euros for kids ages 4-15. No charge for kids under 4. Onsite parking is free.

## FOOD

Snacks and drinks are available for purchase.

## INFORMATION

The website is [trippstadt.de/entdecken/warmfreibad-trippstadt.html](http://trippstadt.de/entdecken/warmfreibad-trippstadt.html). Tickets must be purchased online no more than 48 hours in advance at [vg-landstuhl-termin-buchen.com](http://vg-landstuhl-termin-buchen.com). Visitors must show printed or digital tickets at the kiosk before entering.

— Brian Ferguson



PHOTOS BY BRIAN FERGUSON/Stars and Stripes

There is a dedicated shallow family pool with a large slide at the Trippstadt pool in Germany, about 30 minutes south of Kaiserslautern.

# A cool escape

## Warmfreibad Trippstadt pool offers relief for those near Kaiserslautern

BY BRIAN FERGUSON  
Stars and Stripes

As the mid-August heat bears down on Rheinland-Pfalz, many people are looking for ways to escape their non-air-conditioned homes to cool off and relax, and a pool is the perfect way.

Unfortunately, swimming pools in the Kaiserslautern area are selling out even during a pandemic, and lines are forming as everyone looks to beat the heat.

That's why I headed south to the pool in Trippstadt. It's large with multiple pools and didn't feel crowded at all.

Warmfreibad Trippstadt, which conveniently translates as "warm outdoor pool" in Trippstadt, isn't really warm — it's actually refreshingly cool.

We bought four tickets on Thursday for a Saturday trip. Planning was key, as it often is when it comes to leisure in Germany. Two families from our neighborhood joined us.

From Kaiserslautern, it's a 30-minute drive. The high temperature for the day was 95 degrees Fahrenheit, and we couldn't wait to get there.

Upon arrival, we set a blanket on the grass next to the family

pool with the slide and didn't waste time.

I waded in slowly. Either the water was cold, or I had just become used to the outdoor temperatures and my body got shocked.

I can't count how many times the kids went down the slide. They even braved the highest diving springboard, as did I with a perfect swan dive — or at least that's how I remember it. We played and swam in the different pools for hours, then relaxed in the shade of a large tree in the park.

There is an onsite restaurant that serves food, snacks and drinks. I recommend bringing a cooler, though, as it's always cheaper. A small beer there was 2.50 euro.

The capacity limit for the pool is 650 visitors, and I counted about 300 people there.

Relevant coronavirus distancing rules must be observed on the site. A special 1.5-meter swimming distance rule applies in the water.

There is plenty of space to spread out and once you get there, you won't want to return to your sweltering house.

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The Trippstadt pool has three diving boards at the deep end if just swimming isn't exciting enough.



Small non-swimmers may play at the baby pool.



There is a dedicated lap pool for fitness-seekers.

## WEEKEND: TRAVEL

## Europe

## Fado: The Lisbon blues

As we've had to postpone our travels because of the pandemic, I believe a weekly dose of travel dreaming can be good medicine. Here's a reminder of the fun that awaits us in Europe at the other end of this crisis.

It's after dark in Lisbon's ramshackle Alfama neighborhood. Old-timers gather in restaurants, which serve little more than grilled sardines, to hear and sing Portugal's mournful fado: traditional ballads of lament.

I grab the last chair in a tiny place, next to two bearded men hunched over their mandolins, lost in their music. A bald singer croons, looking like an old turtle without a shell. There's not a complete set of teeth in the house. A spry grandma does a little jive, balancing a wine bottle on her head. The kitchen staff peer from a steaming hole in the wall, backlit by their flaming grill. The waiter sets a plate of fish and a pitcher of cheap cork wine on my table and — like a Portuguese Ed Sullivan — proudly introduces the next singer, a woman who's been singing here for more than 50 years.

She's the star: blood-red lipstick, big hair, a mourning shawl over her black dress. Towering above me, flanked by

those mandolins, she's a fusion of moods — old and young, both sad and sexy. Her revealing neckline promises there's life after death. I can smell her breath as she drowns out the sizzle of sardines with her plush voice.

The man next to me whispers in my ear a rough English translation of the words she sings. It's a quintessential fado theme of



Rick Steves

lost sailors and sad widows: "O waves of the salty sea, where do you get your salt? From the tears shed by the women in black on the boardwalks of Portugal."

Suddenly it's surround-sound as the diners burst into song, joining the chorus.

Fado is the folk music of Lisbon's rustic neighborhoods: so accessible to anyone willing to be out late and stroll the back streets. Since the mid-1800s, it's been the Lisbon blues — mournfully beautiful and haunting ballads about long-gone sailors, broken hearts and bittersweet romance. Fado means "fate" — how fate deals with Portugal's

adventurers ... and the families they leave behind. The lyrics reflect the pining for a loved one across the water, hopes for a future reunion, remembrances of a rosy past or dreams of a better future. It's the yearning for what might have been if fate had not intervened. While generally sad, fado can be jaunty ... in a nostalgic way.

The songs are often in a minor key. The singer (fadista) is accompanied by stringed instruments, including a 12-string guitarra portuguesa with a round body like a mandolin or, as the man whispering in my ear said, "like a woman". Fado singers typically crescendo into the first word of the verse, like a moon emerging from deep inside.

Though the songs are often sorrowful, the singers rarely overact — they plant themselves firmly and sing stoically in the face of fate.

You can visit Lisbon's fado museum, located at the foot of the characteristic Alfama district. It's well worth the time for its recreated bar scenes, its glamorous photo gallery of fado's biggest stars, and a chance to learn about the uniquely Portuguese instruments that go with the genre. The museum is especially memorable for its user-friendly audio clips that demonstrate the



DOMINIC ARIZONA BONICELLI/Ricksteves.com

Portugal's traditional mournful ballads are sung from the heart.

evolution of the art form and its many variations, and for a chance to hear the iconic crooners of fado's glory days. But don't let that be the extent of your fado experience. You must stay up past your bedtime and take in that scene while you're in Lisbon.

While fado has become one of Lisbon's favorite late-night tourist traps, I can still find funky bars — without the high prices and big-bus tour groups — that feel very local. Two districts, the Alfama and the Bairro Alto, have small, informal fado restaurants for late diners or even later evenings of drinks and music.

Handwritten "fado tonight" (fado esta noite) signs in Portuguese are good news, but even a restaurant filled with tourists can serve up fine fado with its sardines.

After thanking the man who'd translated the songs for me, I leave the bar late that night feeling oddly uplifted. An evening seasoned with the tears of black-clad widows reminds me that life, even salty with sadness, is worth embracing.

Rick Steves (ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

## Pulling back the curtain on Europe's protected ethnic minorities

Think of the peoples of Europe, and the Italians, Germans and English might be some of the first to come to mind. Living within their midst are pockets of tiny ethnic minorities with not only identities all their own, but, under a convention of the European Council, rules to protect their rights, prevent their assimilation, and give them a voice in decision-making processes. Today we call in on three minorities who live in some beautiful corners of Europe: a rugged mountain range, a lush green forest and a remote coast.

## The Ladin

The Ladin people of northern Italy number about 40,000. They are at home in the valleys of South Tyrol, Trentino and Belluno. A silver-tongued Ladin tongue, a Rhaeto-Romanic language, is an offspring of vulgar Latin and related to Swiss Romansh.

Many of the legends associated with South Tyrol come from the territory of the Ladins. Their national epic, the Saga of the Kingdom of Fanes, involves marmots, eagles, a silver-tongued Ladin and a wicked witch. A well-known mythological creature is the demon Anguana, a witch-like inhabitant of caves and rivers.

Ladin culture is promoted by a handful of government-sponsored cultural institutes, including one in the South Tyrolean municipality of San Martin de Tor. A circa-1230 castle houses a Ladin museum in which visitors can learn about the language, history, culture, legends and craftwork of the Ladin population.

Archaeological findings from the Stone Age and a geological exhibit about the formation of the Dolomites are included. Admission to the Museo del Ladin Ciastel del Tor costs 8 euros for adults, 6.50 euros for students, and is free for those under

six. Online: tinyurl.com/y5gk6xSs

For a taste of Ladin cuisine, stop in the village of Alta Badia. Dishes to sample include fried pastries filled with spinach or sauerkraut known as Turtres, the spinach-stuffed ravioli Schlutzkrapfen, or Furtaias, a spiral-shaped, fried dessert. Online: tinyurl.com/y3s2sdv6

## The Sorbs

The Sorbs are a West-Slavic minority from Lusatia, a region of Germany straddling Saxony and Brandenburg. Their ancestry stems from Slavic tribes who settled in the area between the Elbe and Oder Rivers, the Baltic Sea and the Erzgebirge mountains more than 1,400 years ago. The term "Wends" dates back to Roman times and was used to encompass all Slavic tribes; today, the two terms are used interchangeably.

The approximately 60,000 Sorbs of the region speak two distinct languages: Upper Sorbian, which resembles Czech and Slovak, and Lower Sorbian, more similar to Polish. Within their area of settlement, Sorbian is an official language alongside German. Sorbian-language institutes such as schools and day-care facilities, amateur theater, folkloric and dance groups, and TV and radio broadcasts help to preserve and transmit the language and culture to future generations.

Sorbian culture can be discovered in the Spreewald, a fairytale-like green region of quaint villages and forests intersected with thousands of narrow, man-made waterways. Bilingual street signage indicates the presence of dual cultures. A



iStock

Sorb folk art includes Easter eggs elaborately decorated with beeswax.

great time to visit is around Easter, to see Sorb folk art in the form of eggs decorated with beeswax and feathers and processions of costumed riders on impeccably groomed horses.

The Sorbian Museum in Bautzen has a rich collection of some 35,000 inventoried objects pertaining to the history, folk art, literature and traditions of these people. Of note are its costumes, the earliest of which date back to the 18th century, toys and a solid fine arts collection. Entry costs 5 euros for visitors over 5. Online: sorbisches-museum.de

Sorbian cuisine tends toward the simple, such as boiled potatoes served with linseed oil and curd. "Bundele" refers to a dish of millet and cabbage. The Sorbian Wedding Meal, a three-course affair of soup, meat and dessert, is a good introduction to the tastes of the region and available in many restaurants. The Wjeblik in Bautzen has an extensive Sorbian menu. For other suggestions, see tinyurl.com/y695jbyr

## The Cornish

The Cornish people are a Celtic ethnic group native to Cornwall, the most southwestern county of Great Britain. Along with their Welsh cousins, they can claim the longest history of any people in Britain, tracing their roots back some 12,000 years to an ancient people who migrated across the continent following the Ice Age. Their Britonic language was shared with the Welsh and Bretons across the sea in northern France, to whom they served as the root stock.

In the UK census of 2011, 73,000 respondents defined themselves as Cornish.

In 2014, the Cornish people were granted minority status under European rules for the protection of national minorities.

The history of Cornwall, a long granite peninsula with 400 miles of coast protruding into the Atlantic, is closely connected with seafaring and mining, and many local museums celebrate this aspect of its heritage.

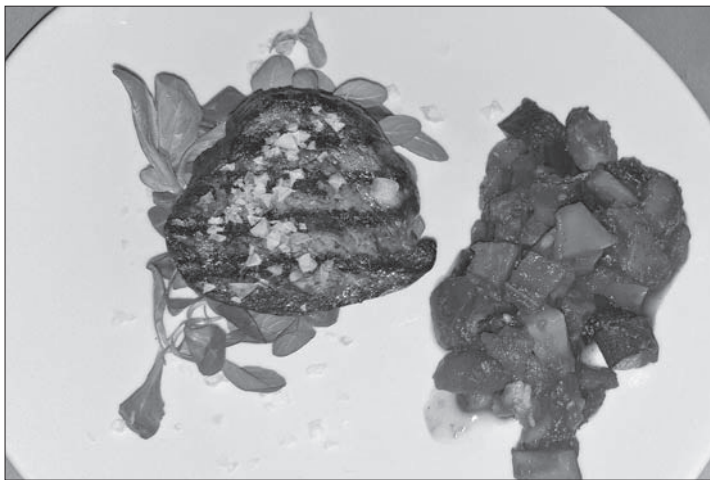
The free-entry Museum of Cornish Life in Helston is a window into the area's social history from the time of its earliest settlers, with exhibits including a collection of elegant costumes, photographs and a fully stocked 1950s kitchen.

An optimal date for a visit to Helston is May 8, Flora Day. On the day, local residents deck out the town with flowers, don their sharpest costumes and dance up a storm. Online: tinyurl.com/y6r6fllp

Traditional include Cornish-clotted cream made from steam-heated unpasteurized milk; Cornish Yarg, a cheese with a nettle coating; saffron buns; and a Cornish pasty, typically stuffed with potato, onion or minced meat. Cornish-style seafood is made from tomatoes, peppers, locally caught fish and seafood and a type of seaweed known as sea spaghetti.

## WEEKEND: FOOD &amp; DINING

## Europe



PHOTOS BY NORMAN LLAMAS/Stars and Stripes

Ristorante Pizzeria La Conca's sirloin with arugula salad and stewed vegetables entree tasted delightful.

# An advantage of Italian living

Ristorante Pizzeria La Conca near Aviano is perfect for dinner out with the family or a date night for two

BY NORMAN LLAMAS  
Stars and Stripes

One of the great advantages to serving in Italy is the country's food, which my family and I can't get enough of eating.

But it was still a challenge to find a restaurant that prepares Italian food just the way we like it. For us, that place is Ristorante Pizzeria La Conca, a homey eatery on the outskirts of Vigonovo di Fontanafredda, about 7 miles from Aviano Air Base.

My wife and I have frequented the restaurant for the past two years. It's family friendly like most Italian places, but we also enjoy it when we get the chance to have a date night without the kids.

La Conca, which has been around since 1987, is located near an industrial area. But its garden, ponds and beautiful dining rooms help diners forget the location. The many trees shade the socially distanced tables throughout the garden as part of their outdoor eating concept, introduced this year following the pandemic. Our kids really liked the setting, which allowed my 5-year-old to run around without getting in trouble.

The main dining room is more intimate and romantic for those on a date. There's also a second dining room that opens up to the garden, right over a pond and a view of all the flowering plants.

The staff is friendly and they speak enough English to help you place your order. The daily menu is seasonal, while the fixed-price menu takes away all the work of having to choose everything. And of course there's always the go-to option of pizza.

Last time we were there, we ordered a platter of mixed cold cuts, cheese and mustard as an appetizer. Other available options include a mixed seafood appetizer; raw thin-sliced black Angus beef with frant, a sweet and spicy cheese from the Carnia region; and lastly, a mixture of deep-fried vegetables served with tartar sauce.



Ristorante Pizzeria La Conca's grilled vegetables with meat entree was firm and smoky.

For our first course, we ordered the seasonal risotto, with bacon and porcini mushrooms. The creamy, al dente risotto merged well with the intense flavor of the mushrooms.

For our main course, my wife ordered the meat with grilled vegetables, which came out smoky and firm. I took the grilled sirloin steak with arugula salad and stewed vegetables. The steak was tender, flavorful and cooked as ordered to a medium finish.

I haven't tried these yet, but here are a few dishes La Conca does that are on my list: sea bass baked in foil with olives; a fried seafood mix with vegetables; rotisserie-roasted suckling pig with sliced vegetables; and radicchio lettuce with sweet and sour ubriaco cheese from a nearby dairy.

I would certainly recommend trying La Conca. The atmosphere, the food and the prices all add up to a very pleasant experience.

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## RISTORANTE PIZZERIA LA CONCA

Address: Via La Croce, 17 33074 Vigonovo di Fontanafredda, PN, Italy

Hours: Monday, noon-2 p.m.; Wednesday-Friday, noon-2 p.m. and 7 p.m.-10 p.m. Saturday, 6:30 p.m.-10 p.m., Sunday, noon-2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.-10 p.m. Closed Monday evening and all day Tuesday.

Food: Salads, rotisserie roast pork, grilled meats, seafood; no kids menu available, but there are many side dishes and pizza.

Drinks: Draft beers, wine and a full bar; sodas, juice, water and coffee.

Prices: 10-20 euros for most entrees; course meals full meals average around 25-30 euros

Dress: Casual

Menu: Italian. Most of the workers speak a little English and are very helpful.

Phone: +39 0434 999870. It's advisable to make reservations.

— Norman Llamas



The restaurant debuted garden seating this summer and all tables are at least a meter apart, which follows local coronavirus regulations.



Ristorante Pizzeria La Conca's garden view dining room.



Ristorante Pizzeria La Conca has a picturesque walkway leading to the restaurant's main entrance.



## WEEKEND: TRAVEL

## Europe

# Approach with caution

Cows grazing in open Alpine fields can be hazardous for hikers

By DENISE HRUBY

Special to The Washington Post

To Reinhard Pfurtscheller, the land he farmed high in the Austrian Alps was always a slice of paradise. He'd wake up in a cabin more than 300 years old, cows already wandering the flower-speckled meadows, snow-capped peaks all around. "There's nothing more beautiful," he said.

Until that warm July afternoon when he watched medics on his pasture zipping shut a body bag.

As the helicopter took off with the victim, Pfurtscheller learned that a 45-year-old hiker from Germany had been brutally assaulted, suffering grievous injuries to her chest and heart. The farmer was well acquainted with her killers: Bea, Flower, Raven and his other cows.

Across the Alps, such attacks once were a shocking rarity. No longer. Amid the sweeping economic changes jeopardizing farmers' future, the creatures that for decades have defined the region's landscape and culture — bovine stars of tourism campaigns — have become liabilities.

Another hiker was killed a year after the German woman died in 2014, and another in 2017. Statistics aren't kept by Austrian, Swiss, Italian or French authorities, but media reports of incidents have become increasingly common. A young mother, her baby strapped to her back, was trampled; both lived. A couple was run off a cliff, surviving despite tumbling 50 feet.

Nowadays, signs warning tourists in German, English, French and Italian are ubiquitous: Cross pastures at your own risk. Hotels display brochures on how to stay safe. Olympic skiers and famous actors help to raise awareness in TV spots and online videos, often stressing "the mountain pasture is no petting zoo." A pilot project in Switzerland will soon launch an app that hikers can use to track the location of free-roaming herds and steer clear.



PHOTOS BY LENA MUCHA/The Washington Post

Hikers and cows eye each other in Neustift im Stubaital, Austria. Cows are often free to roam and graze on open pastures without fences to separate them from hiking trails in the Alps.

Yet this summer, with many Europeans yearning for the outdoors after months of coronavirus lockdowns, there are worries that the hiking season will result in even more attacks. Since June, at least nine have been reported. One involved an 8-year-old boy in southern Germany who had to be airlifted to a hospital.

"Some might think this isn't serious," said Andreas Freisinger, an optician living near Vienna in the town of Bad Vu. "But do you know how terrifying a herd of cows charging at you is, how fast and agile they are?"

It's a rhetorical question; the 50-year-

old Freisinger indeed knows. An agitated herd came at him and his family while they were day-tripping on one of the highest mountains in the eastern Alps. They escaped only because they let their dog off the leash, and the cows pursued Junior as he fled into the forest. When Freisinger went looking for the Saint Bernard mix, he heard a rapid scuffling just before a lone cow knocked him to the ground.

"I was fighting for my life," he recounted recently, describing how he aimed his kicks for the udders. An avid soccer player, he believes that's what saved him. Even so, the animal cracked one of his shoulder blades, an orbital cavity and several vertebrae and ribs, plus flattened his lungs and diaphragm with the weight of a grand piano.

Seven metal plates now hold Freisinger's rib cage together. A 16-inch scar snakes around his torso. But Freisinger has made a full recovery — and still goes hiking.

"It's such a beautiful thing to be in the Alps. But people have to be aware how dangerous this can be," he said.

The scenery that annually draws 120 million tourists would not exist if not for cows grazing. It has been cultivated over seven centuries of farmers driving their herds to mountainside meadows in the summer. The animals' hoofs firm the soil, their tongues gently groom the grasses and wildflowers. In the process, they continually sculpt verdant pastures — beloved backdrops for movies like "The Sound of Music."

All that seemed at stake when a court in the western state of Tyrol found Pfurtscheller solely responsible for the German woman's death and ordered him to pay more than \$210,000 in damages to

her widower and son, plus monthly restitution totaling \$1,850. The 2019 decision shocked farmers, and not just in Neustift im Stubaital, a village of fewer than 5,000 inhabitants who live at the foot of a glacier promoted as the "Kingdom of Snow."

As foreclosure on Pfurtscheller's home and farm loomed, some farmers contemplated banning hikers from their land, a move that would cut off access to the Alps. Others threatened to stop taking their cows into the Alps altogether, a move that would allow nature to cut back in. Forests would soon begin to take over.

"This isn't just about the farmers. It's the wish of all Europeans to have the mountains open for hiking," warned Josef Lanzinger, head of the Alpine farming association in Tyrol.

"This would mean the end of Alpine pastures," said Georg Strasser, president of Bauernbund, the national farmers' association that is one of Austria's most powerful lobbies. Falling dairy and meat prices had already tightened the screws on farmers, he told reporters after the ruling, and the specter of lawsuits would prove too much to bear.

Governments quickly acted to keep cows on the pastures. State governors, federal ministers, even the Austrian chancellor spoke out in support of Pfurtscheller, a slender man of 62 who has been farming since he was 10. Last year, federal law was changed to block similar litigation. New insurance policies now cover every farmer whose animals go wild.

In May, the Austrian Supreme Court of Justice upheld a revised lower-court verdict that held the hiker equally culpable for the tragedy, cut her survivors' compensation to \$92,400 and halved their



Reinhard Pfurtscheller carries his youngest granddaughter as he works on his farm. Pfurtscheller was found responsible when a hiker was killed by cows in his herd.

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## WEEKEND: TRAVEL

## Break the language barrier

Online video chats can help you speak more like a native



BY PAUL ABERCROMBIE  
Special to The Washington Post

**A**s a longtime student of Italian, I look forward to near-annual trips to Italy for a chance to talk with native speakers.

Or, as my wife and teenage son might put it: An opportunity for me to inflict my middling language skills on locals.

And inflict I do. Cabbies, waiters, random strangers in the piazza — no one is safe from my enthusiasm, if semi-competent, chatter.

So when we had to cancel a summer visit to Rome because of the pandemic, I figured my mediocre Italian would backslide further.

But a curious thing happened. With more time on my hands, and access via online chat platforms such as Skype, Google Hangouts and Zoom to unimpeachable native speakers working as tutors, my Italian is probably better than it's ever been. And I haven't even left my home in Tampa.

For many of us passionate so-so speakers of foreign languages who love to travel, being physically grounded needn't mean a linguistic lull. Indeed, as I've learned over the past four-plus months, being stuck stateside can be an opportunity to supercharge your foreign language skills with online tutors. Or at least enjoyably kill time.

To be fair, online language learning isn't new to me. Pre-coronavirus, I typically chatted online with a tutor twice monthly via Skype with Santino

Santinelli, a professional teacher I found online a couple years ago. Patient and good-humored, Santino has helped me plenty, including almost curing my near-pathological inability to correctly use the tricky subjunctive mood.

Since early March, I've upped the frequency of our sessions to twice weekly. I've also sought out new online conversation partners, hoping for exposure to native speakers with variety of accents. Plus, I worried that if Santino had to constantly correct my misuse of words such as *partito* and *partita* (political party) and sporting match, respectively), even his superhuman patience might fray.

By late last month, I was chatting almost daily with one of a revolving cast of a dozen-odd Italians of various ages, genders and geographic locations.

While remote tutors are only an internet search away (after all, it's how I found Santino), I've also become a fan of italki, a social network that connects students of 130-plus languages with more than 10,000 online teachers around the globe.

The cost of virtual lessons varies, with an hour-long session running anywhere from little more than the price of a cappuccino to around \$30 or more. For my purposes (to practice yakking), I tended to go with those priced somewhere in the middle on down. I generally found that tutors charging double digits — and who typically teach full-time — are better at explaining intricacies of grammar. Especially useful for those with unpredict-

able schedules is italki's ability to connect you with tutors pretty much whenever you're available.

Though conversations via Zoom and other online platforms can have all the ambience of a hostage video, the format seems to help me focus. No pesky architectural masterpieces or elegantly dressed passersby to distract me. Or so I tell myself. What's more, the intimacy of chatting with someone from his or her living room makes for a more relaxed setting than a classroom. And if during your lesson a tutor's neighbor knocks on the door to borrow coffee or a husband happens to stroll through the room — as have happened to me — you may luck into impromptu conversations with them, too.

Speaking with Italians who possess different regional accents and backgrounds has refined my conversation skills. I'm starting to correct my more tenacious mistakes. And I'm getting more comfortable forming hypothetical phrases and causative verbs aloud. My vocabulary is bigger, albeit with a fair number of pandemic-centric terms such as *focolaio* del virus (virus hotbed), *didattica a distanza* (distance learning) and *una persona che fa le consegne a domicilio* (home delivery person).

My online lessons also have taken me digitally from a stone's throw from It-

aly's border with Switzerland, to the foot of Sicily's Mount Etna, and places between.

Of course, virtual visits can never replace the real thing. We're still planning to travel next year to Naples, to (among other things) hunt for the best pizza in the dish's birthplace. And we've long promised to show our son the otherworldly-pretty Amalfi Coast.

I'd also like someday to visit Ascoli Piceno, the town in east-central Italy where Santino lives with his partner and infant son. Meanwhile, it's enough to experience his neighborhood vicariously and commiserate about living through a pandemic and talk of the joys and challenges of being a parent.

At the end of a session, I remind myself that by the time it's safe to travel overseas again, I'll have saved enough to get back to Italy and, I hope, speak the language a little better.

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monthly restitution payments. The verdict was a real blow, said Markus Hirm, the lawyer for her family. "But given how much political support the farmer had, it still feels like a win."

Farmers feel otherwise because of the pressures they're facing. The steep Alpine terrain limits the amount of feed that can be grown and the number of cows that can be held. On average, a farmer in Tyrol owns 12 cows, but the more dramatic the landscape gets, the fewer the figure goes. In some valleys, the average is six cows per farmer. By comparison, Germany's average is 67 cows per farm.

Even with government subsidies — Switzerland hands out \$440 for each cow taken to graze in the mountains — earning a living is tough.

"Reinhard really is doing this with all his heart and soul," said Pfurtscheller's wife, Angelika. "There's no money in it."

The number of farms in Tyrol deemed primary businesses is today a fraction of what it once was. In the past decade, more than 25,000 cows have vanished from the Austrian Alps, according to the Agriculture Ministry, along with hundreds of pastures left for nature. The situation is little different in the Alps in Italy, France and Switzerland, where the loss of pastoral land is being closely monitored by authorities.

Many of the farmers still carrying on have pivoted to the least time-intensive type of farming: suckler herds. As opposed to dairy cows, kept separate from their calves and milked twice a day, suckler herds graze largely unattended while nurturing their calves through the summer.

The unintended consequence is that the mamas, fiercely protective of their young, can react strongly when tourists come too close. Hikers with dogs, as well as bike riders, add to cows' stress. (The casualty on Pfurtscheller's farm was accompanied by a terrier named Frodo.)

"To the cows, dogs are direct descendants of wolves," he said. "If you thought your child is in danger, wouldn't you defend it?"

Pfurtscheller has posted new signs on his land warning hikers to keep dogs away from his cows at all times. He fences his pastures.

"People want the pastures, they want cows and farmers in Lederhosen," he said. "But nobody sees how much effort it is."

On a recent sunny afternoon, hundreds of hikers traversed his land, passing a small memorial he built for the woman who died there. The crowds are growing, but his herd is thinning. He's down to six cows, having recently given up two that became too old to carry calves.

"I haven't replaced them," Pfurtscheller said.

# Germany

## DIRECTORY

### Restaurants

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### Hotels

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## WEEKEND: TRAVEL

## Pacific

# Remembering the Himalayas

Stuck at home during pandemic, one man is reminded of lessons learned while ill on a trip to India

By HENRY WISMAYER

Special to The Washington Post

Sickness, frustration, a geographically diminished existence — it recently occurred to me that I had experienced something like this before.

I'd arrived in Delhi in mid-September 2010, as the monsoon was giving way to the clearer skies of fall. I had been on the move for nine months, first busing my way through the Middle East, then down Africa's Great Rift Valley. I was trying to carve out a living as a writer, and I was in a hurry, probably too much so.

As such, I wasn't too perturbed when an unfamiliar debilitation overtook me as I boarded a train to Kathgodam and India's mountainous north. It was only when I reached the Khali Estate, a rambling colonial-era hotel in the Himalayan foothills of Uttarakhand state, that I realized it had portended something more serious. The next morning, on the day I was supposed to embark on a weeklong trek around the Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary, I could scarcely lift myself out of bed. The walk wasn't happening, that much was clear.

The nearest town was Almora, a picturesque hill station strung along a ridge. On its main drag, I found a doctor sitting on a stool outside a pharmacy. He looked me over, humming happily to himself, then dispatched me to a threadbare clinic, where a blood test revealed typhoid. Back at the pharmacy, the grinning doctor said, "It is nothing for you to worry about, so long as you rest, rest, REST!" Each rest rose in octave and emphasis, to drive the point home.

He gave me a blister pack of antibiotics — "four of these a day" — and told me I should eat only bland food: rice, bread and, curiously, radishes.

"Radishes?"  
"There is nothing better for the stomach when you have typhoid," he said. Ten years later, an online search to try to verify this claim list radishes among foods "to be avoided when you have typhoid," suggesting this might have been a dubious prescription all its own.

I returned to the Khali Estate forlorn. The owner's mild-mannered son, Himanshu Pande, said I could stay for as long as I took to convalesce, free of charge. The estate's cottages weren't too busy. Besides, I wasn't going to cost much in food. There was a radish patch out back.

The days stretched out ahead of me. A period that I had anticipated to be one of forward progress and discovery now threatened monotony and stasis. The internet was down; I had run out of books. I wondered what I would do with myself, unaccommodated as I had become to being immobile. But the choice between forsaking an adventure and forfeiting my physical well-being was no choice at all. So I settled in and began the work of not losing my mind.



Ghanshyam Pande

Cottages at the Khali Estate, a resort in the Himalayan foothills where the author recovered from typhoid in 2010.

Mostly, I looked at things. The Khali Estate was founded in 1874 by Gen. Sir Henry Ramsay, then the colonial commissioner of Kumaon province.

Later research revealed that he was a model administrator, one of those benign figures whose paternalism lent legitimacy to Britain's self-image of empire as altruistic endeavor, obscuring the extractive project that was its true raison d'être. One thing I could say with certainty was that he had an eye for geographical situation.

Looking north, through the branches of dead-end pine forest, the hills beyond Khali were a green bowl. But above them, disembodied in the haze, hovered the Garhwal Himalayas, part of the central Himalayan mountains, which serrate the borderlands of northern India before crashing into Nepal's yet higher massifs immediately to the east. Several of India's most famous mountains, including Shivaling, Trishul and Nanda Devi, were identifiable through the window of my round-walled cottage.

Over the coming days, it would be hard to exaggerate how much distraction I sought in this panorama. Using my camera zoom as a makeshift telescope, I found that it was possible to scrutinize the mountains for hours without acknowledging the tedium of the situation in which I found myself. In the early mornings, the sharp light rendered them blue and spectral. Reddish dusks made them brood with menace. In the afternoon, when the lowering sun muted its glare off the snow, I would study the cracks and crevices, picking routes up the vertical pitches and icebound ridgelines, even though such feats were far beyond my capacities as a climber, even in months when I didn't have typhoid.

For the first few days, I reconciled myself to this lonely vigil, as waves of nausea and a crushing lethargy left me bed-bound. As the illness crescendoed, I didn't leave my room at all, the solitude punctuated only by the whispered interjections of genteel attendants, who tiptoed in

with trays of rice, radishes and tea.

Before long, the enervation lifted. Determined to reawaken my atrophied muscles, I began to undertake a circuit of the estate's resting places: a flagstone terrace strewn with wicker chairs, a hammock tied between two tree trunks. As my strength improved, I took short forays into the pine forest, its loam springy with fallen needles, which smothered an adjacent hillside.

Among the estate's staff I found fast friends. I whiled away countless hours in idle conversation with Himanshu and his colleague Dinesh, talking about life in rural Uttarakhand, and about a much-heralded community tourism project, Village Ways, which they had established in the Binsar Sanctuary's villages. Sometimes we would be joined by Himanshu's father, M.D., an otherwise saintly and ephemeral presence, always tending flowers.

Another of the estate's factotums, Madan Sah, was the unofficial custodian of Khali's history. He revealed a roster of past guests and owners that read like a Who's Who of India's extraordinary century. For a spell in the 1930s, Mohandas Gandhi oversaw an ashram here, until the independence movement lured him back to lower ground. Subsequent owners included the Nehru family, the political dynasty of Jawaharlal, India's first prime minister. Not until it was acquired by the Pande family was the estate transformed into a heritage hotel.

Now, the estate's main house, a large red-roofed bungalow encircled by a sandstone colonnade, was left open as a kind of living museum. Inside, the melange of colonial and traditional Indian aesthetics had been carefully preserved. The drawing room had moss-green sofas arranged around a cedarwood fireplace; tribal rugs decorated a floor of seasoned pine. And in one wing, in a musty room lined with cabinets, the most magnificent discovery: a library.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29



## Memories with STARS AND STRIPES Pacific

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## WEEKEND: TRAVEL, FOOD &amp; DINING

## Pacific

## FROM PAGE 28

Most of its books were antique tomes of limited diversion. But in among these was a comprehensive back catalog of the Himalayan Journal, the annual magazine of the Himalayan Club, founded in 1929. And so my own adventures into the Garhwal became vicarious.

I pored through Khali's fraying copies. In the 1930s, the Garhwal Himalayas had been the arena for some of the greatest exploits in mountaineering history. At the time, Nepal, with Everest and its colossal neighbors, was off limits to foreigners. Instead, it was in the Garhwal that European alpinists — "cragmen" in the British idiom of the time — got to grips with the Himalayan proposition. In this era, two Englishmen stand preeminent. Eric Shipton and Bill Tilman were an unlikely pair — Shipton lithe and romantic, Tilman stocky and taciturn. But together they attacked the region's peaks and passes with a purism that would inspire climbers for generations.

In the Journal's 1979 edition, I found a reprint of Tilman's chronicle of their finest cater. In 1934, the two men spent four months surveying the Garhwal's trackless upper reaches. Their journey exposed hidden dimensions to the snowy contours I had been mooning over through my bedroom window. What appeared from Khali's vantage to be a depthless rampart was in fact a citadel fit for the gods: two concentric circles of 20,000-foot peaks, with the tallest and most sacred, Nanda Devi, a twin-peaked mountain of uncommon beauty, erupting from its center. For 50 years, the glacial basin at Nanda Devi's foot had defied

every effort to reach it, until that summer, when Shipton and Tilman shimmied along the formidable box canyon of the Rishi Gorge. When they emerged into the inner sanctum, confronted by what Tilman describes as "an appalling circle of reddish-brown cliff draped with ice-fluting," they had taken nine days to cover four miles.

Soon enough, my frustration ebbed. In that green chasm between Khali and the mountains were the foothills that I had originally come here to explore. But I no longer resented my lost opportunity, feeling grateful instead for the chance it had afforded to arrest my breakneck motion. I suppose the typhoid had precipitated my first proper taste of "slow travel." The result had been an intimate engagement with my immediate surroundings, and that was okay.

When I leapt through the timeline of that restless year, much of it comes back in a haze of boxes ticked and stories filed. But Khali broke the continuum: the two weeks I spent there are recalled with halcyon clarity. I can still picture the estate's management and functionaries lining up to send me off and wish me well, and myself, shaking all their hands, fighting back tears.

Thinking of the episode now, in this cruel and travel-less coronavirus year, I can't help wondering whether one aspect of modernity it might encourage us to dismantle is our culture of fidgety experientialism, of our absolute allergy to boredom. That, at least, was the lesson I took from the last time I languished in a similar quietude: Take stock. Take a breath. The world will still be there tomorrow.



PHOTOS BY THERON GODBOLD/Stars and Stripes

**Left:** The pork gyro from Shupoul in Tachikawa, Japan, is a tightly wrapped pita stuffed with sliced pork, tomato, red onion and Greek yogurt sitting next to a stack of freshly fried, lightly salted potatoes.

**Above:** The tzatziki consists of six crackers with a dollop of the Greek yogurt and cucumber sauce, each with a caper, kalamata olive slice or chunk of cherry tomato.

# Tastes of Greece

Shupoul near Yokota serves waves of Mediterranean flavor

BY THERON GODBOLD

Stars and Stripes

Not far from Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo lies an unassuming restaurant in Tachikawa that flies the Hellenic flag.

The Greek restaurant Shupoul serves Mediterranean flavors from pizza to souvlaki. Shupoul is just a 30-minute drive from the base, and with paid parking next door is easy to reach.

The main dining room has seating for 14 at four tables and four small-group rooms that seat eight.

This restaurant has you covered if a taste of Greece is what you're looking for. The staff welcomed me in Japanese and pointed me to an empty table.

On the menu, each item is named in English, but described in Japanese. I saw many dishes that I didn't expect.

When I lived in Chania, on the island of Crete, I found a little restaurant run by a Greek family where I was introduced to home-cooked Greek food. The menu at Shupoul surprised me with things like moussaka, halloumi cheese and tzatziki.

Over the years, I've learned to sidestep the foods that top the menu and instead go for the staples. If the basic items are good, you've found a place worth another visit.

After looking at Shupoul's menu, I set my mind to tzatziki (about \$3.50) and a gyro lunch plate (about \$11).

As I waited, upbeat jazz played in the background. Quickly, my food began to arrive; the entire meal was at my table in less than 10 minutes.

A salad and drink came with the meal. Leafy

## SHUPOUL

**Location:** 2-5-15 Hagoromocho, Tachikawa, Tokyo 190-0021

**Directions:** A 30-minute drive from Yokota Air Base, Japan. The Google plus code is MCW1H+G4 Tachikawa, Tokyo.

**Hours:** Lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dinner from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Closed Monday.

**Prices:** Appetizers start at \$3.50 and meals range between \$8 and \$16.

**Dress:** Casual

**Information:** 042-519-3923; Online: shupoul.com

— Theron Godbold



Ghanshyam Pandey

The Khali Estate's main house, left open as a living museum, had a library that contained a catalog of Himalayan Journal magazine.

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STARS AND STRIPES



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# WEEKEND: BOOKS

# Drawing parallels to current events

## Malerman's 'Bird Box' sequel feels eerily similar to face masks of 2020

By JULIE HINDS  
Detroit Free Press

**L**ike the title character of his new book, "Malorie" — the sequel to his bestselling "Bird Box" — Josh Malerman has a strong viewpoint on face coverings.

"It's this little piece of cloth, you put it over your face and it decreases the chances of you and someone else getting sick. Great! Done!" says Malerman, 44, speaking by phone a day after the start of Michigan's new mask requirement.

"Malorie is 100% that kind of person: 'We know this works. Why would we try anything else?'"

In the metro Detroit author's terrifying 2014 debut novel "Bird Box," blindfolds were key to surviving a world where just looking at mysterious creatures turned humans violent and insane.

And how's this for a parallel to 2020's coronavirus pandemic? For much of the book, the characters stay quarantined inside to protect themselves from a threat that they can't — or, at least, shouldn't — see.

The 2018 Netflix adaptation of "Bird Box" became a huge hit and — thanks to memes, gifs and late-night TV jokes — a cultural phenomenon. The movie was so popular, it turned Malerman's taut novel into a New York Times bestseller five years after its original publishing date.

Now, readers can find out what happened to the cautious heroine played by Sandra Bullock in the movie. Seeped in tension, the sequel also is prescient in its echoes of current COVID-19 fears.

"Malorie" picks up at the location where "Bird Box" ended, at the school for the blind that Malorie had reached as sanctuary after taking two children on a perilous river journey. Then it jumps ahead a decade to the life that she and her son, Tom, and adopted daughter, Ophelia, both 16, have built at an abandoned summer camp in Michigan.

Fiercely protective of her kids, Malorie keeps them on a strict regimen of safety precautions against the creatures. But when a stranger brings news that people close to Malorie may be alive in the Upper Peninsula, she risks putting her family in jeopardy with another dangerous trip.

The possibilities for a sequel intrigued Malerman, 44, after he watched a pre-release screening of the "Bird Box" movie with his fiancée, Allison Laakko.

"By the end of it, as silly as it sounds, I turned to Allison and I was, like, 'Well, now I want to know what happens to her.' And Allison rolled her eyes (and said), 'You could find out if you want!'"

The success of the movie spurred Malerman to finish a rough draft of "Malorie" by February 2019, relying in part on a plot thread that had been trimmed from "Bird Box."

The Washington Post describes the world of "Malorie" as "utterly compelling," noting that "Malerman balances the novel's various elements — family drama, road novel, supernatural thriller — with skill and genuine compassion for his characters and their blighted lives."

And, of course, a film based on the sequel is in development, according to Malerman, but he says that is all he knows for now.

Malerman hesitates to make comparisons between the plot elements in "Malorie" and the pandemic, because his book is "a good scare," not a real tragedy that's causing massive illness and death globally.

But certain themes resonate with the realities of COVID-19, starting with the real-life political divide in America over taking the virus seriously and following the safety measures recommended by medical authorities.

"There always has been a thing in the 'Bird Box' world of those who live by the blindfold, as Malorie does: those who would wear mask; and those who say this is mass hysteria ... a group psychosis."

According to Malerman, the biggest parallel between the book and

2020 is not masks and blindfolds, but "the 'not knowing' when this is going to come to an end."

In recent months, people have been gravitating toward entertainment that delves into the details of imaginary pandemics, from the 2011 movie "Contagion" to Stephen King's 1978 novel "The Stand."

Malerman thinks such works can be oddly comforting. When you watch or read a comedy, "you're aware of the fact you're escaping something, whereas, if you watch something sad or scary, maybe you'll also be aware that you're facing something."

With "Malorie" just arriving, Malerman sounds open to continuing the "Bird Box" saga, perhaps with a third book. He muses about a situation where the creatures seem to be gone. Who would still keep their blindfolds on and for how long? How can you know for sure they're not there?

"That is a freaky scenario: They're gone!," says Malerman. "That's a great title for book three: 'They're Gone.' You as a reader are like, 'No they're not!'"

Josh Malerman  
CHARLES SYKES, INVISION/AP



# Painting a colorful history of the boring ballot

By STEPHANIE MERRY  
The Washington Post

**W**e tend not to think much about election ballot design unless something goes awry — as happened with Florida's ill-conceived "butterfly ballots," which led to voter confusion in 2000 and may have cost Al Gore the White House.

Generally speaking, ballots are as exciting as you'd expect a bureaucratic document to be. That wasn't always the case. They were used to be colorful, both literally and figuratively, with vivid iconography, ostentatious embellishments and, on occasion, ridiculous punctuation. (One Whig ticket from 1815 contained 15 exclamation points.) Graphic designer Alicia Yin Cheng explores the evolution of ballot design in her book "This Is What Democracy Looked Like: A Visual History of the Printed Ballot," and she's made some fascinating discoveries.

"It was a fundamental revelation for me, as I was researching, that these ballots don't operate the same way that we

think that they do now," she said during a recent phone conversation. Early ballots, which were produced by individual parties, "were not cast in private, so they were meant to be literally a public display of your allegiance."

And what a display they were. Parties experimented with dramatic imagery and pointed slogans to set their ballots apart and differentiate themselves from the competition (unless, of course, they were copying another party's ticket to deliberately confuse voters). These practices disappeared around 1900, when, inspired by Australia's voting system, the states began administering standardized ballots, and voters could make their picks in private.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**Washington Post: How did you end up writing the book?**

Cheng: I was reading an article by Jill Lepore in the New Yorker about how we used to vote. This was back in 2008. It was just such a revelatory article for me to understand the early voting practices and what that entailed. And then, as she was describing ballots, very briefly, she just mentioned that they were colorful. That alone, from a designer's perspective — I thought, what? Because, as a participating citizen, I have seen the ballot, but I never thought twice about it as a graphic object.

**Which ballots most interested you?**

The ones that really piqued my interest [included] ones that were extremely colorful when I felt like it wasn't necessary to festoon them. Certainly the aesthetics of that period — the 1820s to '60s — were very ornamental, Victorian, et cetera. But there was one that was more of a rainbow print, from the American Antiquarian Society, which was this crazy thing, and I just wondered, why would this happen? So seeing that kind of example and being a designer was especially fun to unpack, because I could take it to a letterpress printer and ask, what do you think the process was for this?

**I was a little surprised by how blatantly racist some of the ballots were.**

Right. Before the two-party system that we know today, there was a proliferation of political parties and factions. Many were based on platforms that would be shocking to us today: anti-Chinese and anti-immigration slogans were vividly illustrated on the ballots. Parties back then took pride in their stance against the immigrant hordes encroaching on their livelihood. It all sounds so eerily familiar now. There was one candidate in San Francisco who said if he would gain office, he would run all the Chinese out within 24 hours of his victory. And a lot of people were into it.

That is another kind of shocking aspect that is not relegated to that time period either, because in Louisiana, I think in the '60s, the candidates' names were listed with their race alongside the party affiliation. Even though the ballots are relics of an earlier time, the themes they represent still prevail: voter suppression, party control, partisanship, electoral fraud.

**What were some moments when ballot design most drastically changed?**

That moment in our history when, around 1900, voting becomes a private act. They required that the state produce it and that all the candidates would be listed on one ballot by office. That was really radical. That's a huge shift in terms of how the layout is dictated. So that's why the ballots get suddenly super boring.

**As a designer, is it sad for you that things have gotten so bland?**

I think I called it "graphically torpid" in the book, but before that it was a typographic carnival — just too nuts to be believed. I happened to be in town for an election in Amsterdam, and it was like a graphic designer's fantasy. Everything from the signage to the ballot was beautifully typeset and everything was really well organized and considered. But, you know, that's Holland, a much smaller country. We are a glorious rainbow coalition of messy individuals. And that's what our voting practices look like, too.



## WEEKEND: BOOKS

## Lessons of a past pandemic

‘The Great Influenza’ of 1918 will hit familiar notes for today’s societies

By ROBERT H. REID  
Stars and Stripes

It was first spotted by a country doctor in Haskell County, Kan., in early 1918. It looked like influenza, but struck with speed and lethality not seen before. Within months, the disease had swept the planet. By the time it had run its course about three years later, more than 50 million people were dead worldwide. Some estimates place the real global death toll as high as 100 million.

The story of history’s deadliest pandemic is told in rich detail by author and historian John M. Barry in “The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History.”

Barry’s well-researched account was first published in 2004 by Penguin Books and was updated on the 100th anniversary of what became popularly known as the “Spanish Flu” pandemic.

His work is well worth reading today in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, may not be influenza, even though the two diseases produce similar symptoms. However, the impact on society — the dislocation, fear, conflicting information and uncertainty — are much the same.

Many of the details from 1918 sound ominously familiar: government denials and misinformation; churches, theaters and stores closed; public resistance to protective face masks; economic catastrophe; overcrowded hospitals, and doctors touting unproven cures.

According to Barry, the U.S. Armed Forces

played a major, albeit unintentional, role in spreading the virus around the world.

Newly drafted soldiers from Haskell County in southwestern Kansas carried the virus to Camp Funston, now Fort Riley, where troops were preparing to deploy to France in World War I.

Infected soldiers traveling by train from training camps to East Coast ports and then by ship to France spread the disease throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Public health officials figured out what was happening, and some of them suggested suspending troop deployments to France until the virus could be brought under control.

However, President Woodrow Wilson was insisting that as many soldiers as possible be rushed to Europe, and the government was drawing up plans to expand — not slow down — the draft and deployments.

Suspending troop movements was out of the question, even as the disease was exploding at major French ports, aboard crowded troop ships and in the trenches at the front. Both sides were affected. The German commander, Erich von Ludendorff, blamed the pandemic for the failure of Germany’s spring offensive of 1918.

“It was a grievous business having to listen every morning to the chief of staff’s recital of

the number of influenza cases, and their complaints about the weakness of their troops,” Barry quotes von Ludendorff as writing after the war.

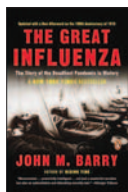
The public in Europe and the United States knew little of the scope of the outbreak until the pace of death could no longer be hidden. Wartime censorship and appeals to patriotism kept the press from reporting details for fear they would destroy morale.

“Newspapers reported on the disease with the same mixture of truth and half-truth, truth and distortion, truth and lies which they reported every evening else,” Barry writes. “And no national official ever publicly acknowledged the danger of influenza.”

The exception was Spain, which was neutral in the conflict. Newspapers there were free to report on the pandemic, and the press elsewhere could pick up Spanish news stories without penalties.

“The disease soon became known as “Spanish influenza” or “Spanish flu,” very likely because only Spanish newspapers were publishing accurate news of the spread of the disease that were picked up in other countries,” Barry writes.

A word of caution. This book is not a quick and easy read, especially for non-medical professionals. The work includes lengthy portions about the nature of viruses and the history of American medicine, which was woefully inadequate when the 20th century began. However, the book offers fascinating insights into the vulnerability of modern society to the rapid spread of new and deadly diseases — valuable lessons in the Age of the Coronavirus.



## ‘Flying with Dad’ shows intersection of military, family

It would take author Yvonne Caputo more than 60 years to finally make the connection with the dad she had longed for her entire life, and it is a lifetime of experiences that took them both on a journey that she shares in her book, “Flying with Dad.”

From the opening chapters, the reader is drawn headfirst in the Caputo family, experiencing the gamut of interpersonal dynamics and circumstances — from happy memories to devastating tragedies. The author describes a daughter’s lifetime of failed attempts to forge a relationship with her father. The relationship she eventually concluded was unattainable, until it was.

The non-linear technique Caputo uses weaves a fluid story back and forth through time, taking the reader on an intensely personal experience culminating in a father-daughter bond that was years in the making.

Caputo takes us from her early childhood memories, through her father, Mike Caputo’s, decision to enlist in the Army during World War I, to his final days. We come to know a young man as he discovers who he is and who he ultimately becomes. Mike grows from an eager young man supporting the war effort with his hands and tools, to a man propelled into WWII as a navigator on a B-24 with the 467th Bomb Group.

Excerpts from letters between Mike and Mike’s wife, Teddy, reveal a vulnerability that Yvonne never perceived in her father when she was growing up. Later conversations would answer so many of Yvonne’s questions, gradually eroding the barricades separating them.

Flying with Dad” is not your typical WWII read. While it covers Mike’s military experiences and mission highlights, the book focuses on the making of Michael Caputo, and how his daughter, Yvonne, finally learned who her father truly was.

— Debra Kujiawa

## ‘The Living Dead’ rise again from pieces of Romero’s unfinished novel

By MARIA SCIULLO  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

In “The Living Dead,” a new novel, the late George A. Romero explores the bigger world of the mayhem he began in his 1969 film, “Night of the Living Dead.”

But Romero — who died of cancer in 2017 — did not finish the book. Chicago author Daniel Kraus picked up the threads of his partial manuscript and, using the horror auteur’s notes and an unearthed short story, finished “The Living Dead.”

“I was just thinking the other day I should have gotten a little bracelet that said WWGD — What Would George Do?” Kraus said in a phone interview. “Because there were months and months of preparations that were about really getting into George’s head and being able to anticipate his reaction to certain plot elements.”

Kraus said in a “Living Dead” fanboy from childhood, and his reverence for the late filmmaker is apparent. Yet this is his book as much as Romero’s.

“This is a Romero-Kraus book, and there is no way around that. He didn’t write enough that I wouldn’t have to put a lot of myself in it,” Kraus said.

Kraus co-authored “The Shape of Water” with Guillermo del

Toro, which went on to be an Academy Award best picture-winner. He has two more works coming out in September: “They Threw Us Away,” “the darkest teddy bear story of all time,” and a graphic novel, “The Autumnal.”

“The Living Dead” opens with a harrowing scene in a morgue, where suddenly-awakened bodies in zippered bags inch their way blindly across the cold floor like big worms. The assistant coroner is Luis, which happens to be Suzanne DesRocher-Romero’s pet name for her husband.

The Macmillan Publishers group rebuts the zombie uprising to Day 1 in a contemporary setting. Chronologically, the book’s “first act” could be followed by Romero’s six “Living Dead” films, which would then be followed by the rest of the book. It spans about 15 years. Local places that Romero made famous in “Living Dead” movies, including Evans City and Monroeville, Pa., “pop up along the way,” Kraus said.

Romero did not write the first half of a book and set it aside. His chapters and musings are scattered throughout.

“Cutting anything was agony-inducing. But there were a few sequences that once we put together the original manuscript,

the newly discovered pages, the story ... there were a few that just did not fit,” Kraus said. “Cutting those out hurt, and some (chances) I really liked.”

One of the original inspirations for the manuscript was a Romero short story told from the viewpoint of a zombie. With DesRocher-Romero’s help, Kraus was able to track it down to Verona actor/filmmaker Christian Slater.

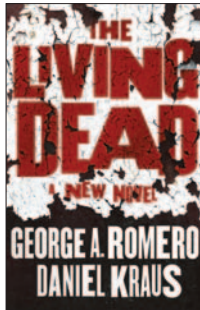
Kraus said he believes his co-author enjoyed the freedom of writing a novel vs. a screenplay.

“For the first time in his life, he could stop worrying about budget ... and producers who say ‘We can’t shoot this.’” He admitted that some ideas were so wild, they didn’t make the cut.

“There was just a bananas scene that I loved — essentially a zombie being attacked by hipopotamuses — and that was only part of that crazy scene. He was just having a ball with this thing.”

Romero was celebrated for making horror films that represented the (often awful) human condition. Even as a child, Kraus said he realized there was more on screen than met the eye.

“I think zombies are an idea kids can wrap their heads around easier. Especially ‘Night





## WEEKEND: MUSIC



Tim left, and Fred Williams react to the famous drum fill in Phil Collins' 1981 song "In the Air Tonight" in a screenshot from YouTube. Subscriptions to the twins' YouTube channel have skyrocketed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interest in Collins' song has surged, too — to the tune of a 1,500% increase in downloads, according to Billboard.

# Something 'In the Air'

Meet Tim Williams, one of the YouTube twins who reignited interest in an old Phil Collins hit

By MIKAEL WOOD  
Los Angeles Times

**T**im Williams and his twin brother, Fred, have rocketed to internet celebrity over the past few weeks thanks to that most modern of cultural artifacts: the reaction video, in which the comedy or drama of someone's first encounter with a piece of art becomes itself a piece of art available to be encountered by someone else.

In their most talked-about clip, which has been viewed more than 6.4 million times since they posted it on YouTube in late July, the Williams brothers listen intently to Phil Collins' eerie 1981 hit "In the Air Tonight."

How could they, at 22, have missed this undeniable (and oft-sampled) pop classic? "I think we were late bloomers of everything," Tim said in a video interview. "That's why we didn't hear none of this music."

In the video, he and Fred are sitting in Tim's bedroom in their mother's house in Gary, Ind.; a 2Pac poster hangs on a wall behind them, while between them looms a graphic of Collins' stony visage as pictured on the cover of the singer's "Face Value" album.

"He look like he staring into my soul," Fred says. "I'm scared — I can't look at him."

The emotional payoff comes when the two flip out at the sound of Collins' famously slow-to-arrive drum fill. Both brothers are knocked back in their swivel chairs; Tim turns to Fred in disbelief, as though he needs to confirm that his

brother heard what he just heard. "I ain't seen nobody drop a beat three minutes in a song," Fred says, but part of what's magical about the video is that you, the viewer, have seen someone do that — this exact someone, in fact.

To watch the Williams twins experience the surprise you know Collins has in store — and then to watch it again (and again), because they're so insanely charming — is to feel the past, present and future all jostling for space in the same moment.

On their YouTube channel, TwinsthenewTrend — which Tim said grew from 50,000 subscribers to more than 400,000 in less than a month — the brothers offer their first-listen analysis of dozens of songs, including the Carpenters' "We've Only Just Begun," Aerosmith's "Dream On" and "Jolene" by Dolly Parton, whose official Twitter account recently shouted out the Williamses.

"No point in begging," the tweet read. "Jolene already stole these two."

Each of the videos — the "Jolene" clip has more than 3.6 million views — showcases the same warmth and curiosity that propelled "In the Air Tonight" to trending-topic ubiquity. (Downloads for Collins' original increased by more than 1,500% in the video's wake, according to Billboard.) If you know the

classics they're reacting to, you watch to have some of your assumptions confirmed. But you also hear new things through the ears of the brothers.

Have you ever stopped to consider, as they do, how crucial "Jolene's" zippy tempo is to its sense of desperation?

Tim said he and his brother — Fred is older by 75 minutes — started doing reaction videos about a year ago as a way to express their love of music.

Although they began with hip-hop songs, they quickly realized that doing older tunes from other genres would help them stand out on the increasingly crowded platform.

"The norm, they just follow the trend and listen to whatever everybody else listen to," he said. "And old music before I was born, it's actually good, if you pay attention to it, because back then, you really had to use your voice and sing without AutoTune and everything."

"Nowadays, you got computers and all to do that." The brothers, whose grandfather was a pastor with his own church in Gary, grew up listening mostly to gospel music. They didn't discover the titans of the 1990s and 2000s rap — 2Pac, 50 Cent, the Notorious B.I.G., Lil Wayne — until they were teenagers. "But we never took the time to listen to old R&B, like Luther Vandross," Tim said.

"I don't even know who that is."

They choose songs based on recommendations that come in on Instagram and Patreon and, of course, in the YouTube comments section. So do the videos truly capture their first time hearing the songs?

"Yes, for sure," Tim said.

And do they ever do a second take? Maybe sharpen a funny comment from their first go-through?

"We just do it the first time."

Of the reaction to their reactions, Tim said, "It's been crazy," and added that he's been fielding calls from TV shows and "people hitting us up for deals or people who just want to send us stuff." He added that he and Tim have been approached to create their own show, although he was unclear for now what that might look like.

Then again, he added, graduating from YouTube doesn't necessarily feel like the goal. "This is my dream job," he said. "I want to do YouTube forever." At the moment, he's attending to TwinsthenewTrend full time; the brothers even have merch for sale, including a hoodie that sells online for \$47.99. (Fred is still working his day job as a barber — and, yes, he cuts his brother's hair.)

Asked if they've traveled to the show-biz capitals of New York and Los Angeles, Tim said he had no interest in getting on an airplane during the COVID-19 pandemic that, not incidentally, has helped create a captive audience for his videos.

"When corona over, we'll most definitely go," he said. "But we just been here in Indiana."

## WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS

# Edwards enjoys 'Total Freedom'

By JILL LAWLESS  
Associated Press



**Kathleen Edwards**  
Total Freedom (Dualtone)

**K**athleen Edwards' first studio album since 2012, "Total Freedom," is the sound of an artist with a second wind.

Burned out after releasing four albums in a decade, the Canadian singer-songwriter set aside her music career in 2014 and opened a cafe called Quitters in her hometown of Ottawa. This slow-brewed album marks her return.

Compared to earlier work like Edwards' raw 2003 debut "Faller," the new 10-track set is a more polished package from a more contented musician.

It opens strongly with "Glenferri," a wistful tribute to the past and her ex-husband. Unsentimental honesty and vivid word pictures are Edwards' songwriting strength — "We had a tour bus with a bed in the back / We bought a rock 'n' roll dream, it was total crap" — and the result will resonate with anyone who knows the sour-sweet pull of looking back.

Edwards is an energetic guitarist and singer whose urgent vocals can cut to the heart or flash with sarcasm. "Love is blind / Whoever bought that line must be a real sucker," she sings on "Fool's Ride."

Those qualities are somewhat muted by the slickly layered production by Edwards, longtime collaborator Jim Bryson and Nashville producer Ian Fitchuk, who won two Grammys for his work on Kacey Musgraves' critically acclaimed "Golden Hour" album.

A tight rhythm section propels songs about soured relationships ("Hard on Everyone," "Fool's Ride"), the relief of shedding obligations ("Birds on a Feeder") and the pleasure of renewing a childhood friendship (the singalong-catchy "Simple Math").

There is melancholy, too, as Edwards mourns a beloved dog on "Who Rescued Who" and remembers a friend gone too soon on "Ashes to Ashes" — a more stripped-down song built around gentle acoustic guitar and banjo.

But there is also acceptance that things change on "Take It With You When You Go," which closes the album on a gently elegiac note.

Fans of the earlier Edwards might wish for a few more rough edges, but "Total Freedom" is the work of a relaxed and confident artist. Welcome back.

After six years away from the music business, Kathleen Edwards returns with her first studio album since 2012.

Remi Theriault



## Steve Howe

Love Is (BMG)

Steve Howe's guitar mastery was a key component of the success of prog-rock masters Yes, and you can hear some of his trademark acoustic and electric sounds on "Love Is," his first solo album since 2011.

Occasionally overly mellow and held back by his limited vocal range, the album still has enough flashes of Howe's stringed wizardry to attract a crowd.

Beyond his work with Yes, Asia and GTR, to name a few of the lineups he's anchored over the years, Howe has also appeared on songs by acts as diverse as Queen, Lou Reed and Frankie Goes to Hollywood.

Howe performs just about every sound on "Love Is," and the 10 compositions are split evenly between instrumentals and songs, alternating in the running order. His son Dylan plays drums and Jon Davison, the singer in the current Yes formation led by Howe, handles backing vocals and bass on the songs.

Opener "Fulcrum" has a "Christmas with Hank Marvin" vibe, while "See Me Through" is catchy and well-paced but a stronger lead voice could have put it over the top.

Howe described the quasi-title tune, "Love Is A River," as "a sort of quintessential track," and its changes of pace and mix of environmental and mystical preoccupations make it one of the most Yes-sounding efforts here.

In fact, you can discover snippets of Howe's classic Yes-era arpeggios, strums and solos on practically all the tracks but as the minutes pass, they too often fade into less distinctive ideas.

Closer "On the Balcony" opens with a furious GTR-like riff, deals with the challenges of live performances and Davison's vocal support again so eerily echoes Howe's seemingly eternally estranged former bandmate, Jon Anderson, that it's bound to provoke double takes.

Howe recently told Rolling Stone magazine that a reunion with Anderson and Rick Wakeman is "completely unthinkable," but should he think twice, it would be all right.

— Pablo Gorondi  
Associated Press

## Jon Anderson

1000 Hands  
(Blue Egan Records)

Jon Anderson started making "1000 Hands" nearly 30 years ago before setting it aside. Its title alludes to the lengthy and impressive roster of musicians who appear on the album, from several of the singer's former Yes bandmates to Chick Corea, Jean-Luc Ponty, Rick Derringer and Larry Coryell, among others.

After Ringo Starr, Anderson is one of rock's best-known endorsers of the "peace and love" ideal and there's plenty of his advocacy here for a kinder, more reflective approach to life, relationships and the planet.

"Ramlama," like "We Have Heaven" from Yes' "Fragile" album, is a finely layered vocal workout with an uplifting melody. It's followed by "First Born Leaders," a joyous, anthemic song that pins its hopes on upcoming generations. Both, as well as "Makes Me Happy," could be lost tracks from the "The Lion King."

Anderson's expertise with epic, multi-sectioned pieces is evident, especially on two tracks exceeding the eight-minute mark.

"Activate" features Ian Anderson (Jethro Tull) on flute and an all-star guitar section including Coryell, Steve Morse and Pat Travers, while "1000 Hands (Come Up)" is anchored by late Yes co-founder Chris Squire and drummer Billy Cobham.

Closer "Now and Again," which appears in shorter variations as the first track and again midway through the album, has a characteristically celestial mood, accentuated by Steve Howe's solo on classical guitar, and a most simple message that best sums up this fine effort from Anderson: "Love is truly all you need."

— Pablo Gorondi  
Associated Press



# WEEKEND: TELEVISION REVIEW

## Horrors ripped from the pages of history

HBO's 'Lovecraft Country' infuses a Jim Crow-era plot with Lovecraftian cosmology

By HANK STUEVER  
The Washington Post

**H**BO's horror drama "Lovecraft Country" arrives at an opportune moment in American culture, with big, scary metaphors about the monster of bigotry — but these days, what show worth watching isn't somehow on-topic?

This is as it should be, given the last five or so years of unacceptably racist torment, class divide, mass violence and despicable politics that summoned forth the anger, creativity and diversity to reflect it all back to a viewer. If you've been watching anything besides cozy British crime solvers, then you know: "Watchmen," "The Handmaid's Tale," "When They See Us," "Chernobyl" — your TV has been thematically attuned to meltdown moods and history's hideousness. If it weren't, the people making and writing the shows would need a serious wake-up call.

That said, not every player in this arena is going to triumph just by showing up. In "Lovecraft Country," which premiered Aug. 16 stateside, producer, writer and showrunner Misha Green ("Underworld") delivers a series that is urgent, sufficiently gruesome and, where it matters most, boldly willing to assert control over a literary fantasy realm first envisioned by a long dead and demonstrably problematic creator. That would be H.P. Lovecraft, a New England-born writer whose cosmic horror stories gained popularity after his death in 1937 but who is also remembered for his racist and anti-Semitic views.

In addition to everything else the show aims to achieve, "Lovecraft Country," based on Matt Ruff's 2016 novel, reclaims some important territory in the name of Black nerds everywhere, filled as it is with characters who become immersed in a complicated and often difficult to follow Lovecraftian cosmology of creatures, secret societies, wizardry, spellcraft, weird science, confounding encryptions and other mysteries contained in old maps, passageways, relics and lost languages. Relying on their brains as much as their resiliency, these heroes confront evil most often on an intellectual level — whether it's a galloping goo-monster with tentacles and teeth, or a sneering pack of white teenage boys who don't want Black people living in their neighborhood.

Fusing Lovecraft's jibber-jabber onto a more compelling parallel story of Black lives mattering in the Jim Crow era (circa 1955) may be ingenious, but it doesn't always succeed. The show gets a little too busy, too soon.

In the first five episodes made available for this review (there



ELI JOSHUA ADE/HBO

Courtney B. Vance (left), Jonathan Majors and Jurnee Smollett star in "Lovecraft Country," which is based on Matt Ruff's 2016 novel.

are 10 episodes in all), "Lovecraft Country" feels like two competing shows — a basic, cable phantasmagoria for geeks and a civil rights drama for geeks and everyone else. The shifts in tone lack the seamlessness seen in last year's "Watchmen," which achieved a similar blend of commentary and comic book. Given "Lovecraft Country's" visceral predilections and panting pace, the better comparison here might be "True Blood," a vampire melodrama that did double duty as a coming-out story.

Still, there is plenty to recommend here, especially for those seeking something unique as this summer's schedule breathes its last. "Lovecraft Country" is visually striking and inventively imagined, even when it gets corny. There are some sizzling moments and scenes, such as when one Black character acquires a useful ability to morph into a white person, involving a bloody process in which one body clays its way out of the other.

This builds on a growing movement in today's horror tales, in which these old metaphors of Red Menace invasions and

psychotic maniacs have moved over for more pressing analogies to racism. Jordan Peele, who is one of "Lovecraft Country's" producers (as is J.J. Abrams, whose fingers continue to show up in many pies), deftly presented this thesis in his movies "Get Out" and "Us," where Black protagonists must fight for their lives against white tormentors who have sinister plans for Black bodies.

**Relying on their brains as much as their resiliency, these heroes confront evil most often on an intellectual level — whether it's a galloping goo-monster with tentacles and teeth, or a sneering pack of white teenage boys who don't want Black people living in their neighborhood.**

A similar principle is threaded through "Lovecraft Country," which opens with its hero, an Army veteran named Atticus (Jonathan Majors), who goes by "Tic," riding in the segregated back of a Chicago-bound bus while reading one of Edgar Rice Burroughs' sci-fi fantasy novels about John Carter, a Confederate soldier who travels to Mars and fights in a war. A fellow traveler expresses her disapproval when she learns that Tic is reading a novel in which the hero fought for the Confederacy.

"Stories are like people," Tic explains, and while reading them "you just try to cherish them and overlook their flaws." The line serves as a kind of permission to step back into Lovecraft's world, faults and all, as Tic begins to hunt for his missing father, Montrose (Michael Kenneth Williams), who has disappeared in the woods of Massachusetts, on the trail of a revealing secret about the family's lineage.

Tic's uncle, George (Courtney B. Vance), is the author of the annual "Safe Negro Travel Guide," a guidebook for Black travelers. The two set off from Chicago for Massachusetts in George's car, accompanied by Leti (Jurnee Smollett), a restless photographer and childhood friend of Tic's. Their journey across the Midwest and Northeast is fraught with dirty looks and outright danger, culminating in a run-in with a particularly nasty sheriff and his deputies.

The trio's search for Montrose winds up in the spooky, many-roomed mansion of Samuel Brailwhite (Tony Goldwyn), the grand poobah of a secret fraternal order called the Sons of

Adam, who has designs on Tic's bloodline, which, under the right ceremonial conditions, holds the key to ... well, unless you're a huge fan of this kind of thing, it's probably best to just let the CGI effects play out.

When the gang returns to Chicago — pursued by Brailwhite's witchy daughter, Christina (Abbey Lee) — the show finds a more coherent and entertaining balance between spectacle and storytelling. There are haunted houses and other ghoulish delights, but the characters at least take a moment to develop, giving the show's strong cast (including Aunjanue Ellis as George's wife, Hippolyta; and Wunmi Mosaku as Leti's half sister, Ruby) a chance to do more than recoil in fright.

As with "Underground," showrunner Green's style mixes old and new. The soundtrack ranges from fresh takes on the R&B music that informed '50s rock 'n' roll to more recent selections of hip-hop; the sound of James Baldwin's famous 1965 debate with William F. Buckley Jr. plays across the lonely highway miles; in a later episode, the show makes elegant use of Gil Scott-Heron's 1970 spoken-word classic "Whitey on the Moon."

If nothing else, it's proof that anachronism is a useful tool, particularly where history has been a stubborn beast.



## WEEKEND: TELEVISION &amp; DVD

## NEW ON DVD

**“Yes, God, Yes!”:** Sheltered Midwestern high school junior Alice (Natalia Dyer) goes to the kind of Catholic school where girls are reprimanded if their uniform skirts don't measure the right length above the knee, and the shame surrounding anything remotely sexual is sacred. This makes Alice's quintessential, accidental, early 2000s teenage sex education — i.e. via AOL chat room — even more salacious.

Hounded by a false, graphic rumor concerning her and a boy at a party and wanting to rid herself of that good old-fashioned Catholic guilt for her chat room sins, Alice doubles down on her religion and heads to a four-day retreat meant to renew her relationship with Jesus. Her plan is foiled almost immediately as Alice spots her dreamy football star small group leader and enters a cycle of hormones, temptation, embarrassment and misogynist hypocrisy.

Also available on DVD:

**“The King of Staten Island”:** Pete Davidson stars in Judd Apatow's latest as a young stand-up comic dealing with his father's tragic death on 9/11.

**“The Trip to Greece”:** Steve Coogan and Rob Brydon conclude their “Trip” series with a voyage following the steps of Odysseus.

**“The Burnt Orange Heresy”:** An art collector (Mick Jagger) sends a critic (Claes Bang) on a mission to steal from the collector's favorite artist (Donald Sutherland).

**“Chicago Fire: Season Eight”:** The eighth season of the Dick Wolf series opens with Otis (Yuri Sardarov) in a dangerous mattress factory fire.

**“Chicago Med: Season Five”:** The fifth season of the Dick Wolf series follows the complications of both Dr. Manning's (Torrey DeVitto) car accident and Dr. Rhodes (Colin Donnell) father's death.

**“Dead Still”:** The mystery miniseries follows Victorian Irish postmortem photographers (Michael Smiley) and Molly (Kerr Logan).

**“Deep Blue Sea 3”:** Dr. Emma Collins (Tania Raymonde) and her associates return to Little Happy island to study sharks as a suspicious team puts all their lives in jeopardy.

**“Gunskis: The Complete Movie Collection”:** The collection includes “Return to Dodge,” “The Last Apache” and “To the Last Man.”

**“Infamous”:** A couple on the lam (Bella Thorne and Jake Manley) livestream their robberies via social media.

**“One Night in Bangkok”:** A hit man (Mark Dacascos) holds a cabbie hostage (Vanida Gloten) as he makes his kills.

**“SEAL Team: Season Three”:** The CBS series picks back up with Jason (David Boreanaz) and the team in Serbia.

**“The Flash: The Complete Sixth Season”:** The CW series starring Grant Gustin as the beloved DC superhero marches on.

**“Washington”:** The miniseries follows the life of the country's first president, Jeff Daniels stars. — Katie Foran-McHale/TNS



APPLE TV+/AP

Brendan Hunt, left, and Jason Sudeikis star in “Ted Lasso,” in which an American football coach (Sudeikis) heads up a British soccer team.

# Coaching beyond the field

## Inspired by his mentors, Sudeikis says Ted Lasso is ‘best version of myself’

By MARK KENNEDY  
Associated Press

Jason Sudeikis was a huge sports fan growing up in Kansas, especially of basketball — not so much that game where you kick a ball into a goal. “The beautiful game? I didn’t get it a couple of years ago. I thought, ‘Well, good for them for getting that nickname.’ But now I get it,” he says. “While I have a very shallow understanding of soccer, I have a deep appreciation for it.”

Sudeikis artfully mines his ignorance of the sport in the new Apple TV+ series “Ted Lasso,” in which he plays an American football coach who takes charge of an elite British soccer team despite having little knowledge of the game they also call football.

“You could fill two internets with what I don’t know about football,” Lasso admits to shocked English journalists when he’s unveiled as the new coach of fictional West London club AFC Richmond.

Sudeikis’ Lasso may be a fish out of water, but he’s relentlessly optimistic and kind, armed with homespun wisdom in the face of hostility: “You don’t know what you’re doing!” is the only printable chant lobbed his way.

Sudeikis and executive producer Bill Lawrence (“Scrubs” and “Spin City”) fleshed out a three-dimensional Lasso from the character first created for NBC Sports to sell Americans on coverage of English Premier League soccer.

“One of the reasons that Jason and I connected on this is we both felt — this was pre-pandemic — that, ‘Man, it was such a cynical world out there that we could use a really optimistic and hopeful show,’” Lawrence said.

While the NBC version of Lasso was a bit of a buffoon, the new series adds depth, with the hero estranged from his wife and people constantly underestimating him. He and his right hand man, played by Brendan Hunt, try to help the players realize their potential and sort out their romantic lives.

Lasso inherits a mediocre and divided team, with an aging veteran and a hotshot youngster snipping at each other.

“When it comes to locker rooms, I like them just like my mother’s bathing suit — I only want to see them in one piece,” Lasso says.

The character is an amalgamation of several people Sudeikis has met, including a kindly basketball coach in high school and the revered basketball coach John Wooden. “Ted is just the best version of myself,” he says.

Hannah Waddingham, the English theater star, plays Lasso’s steely new boss with murky motives for hiring an amateur American football coach to run her soccer team. But like all the roles in the series, viewers will see Waddingham’s go deeper, revealing a full gamut of emotions.

“Everyone has their light and shade. Everybody gets an up and a down several times over,” Waddingham says. “The lesson is, never ever judge a book by its cover.”

When he was initially approached about the job, Sudeikis said the creators had a volatile, angry coach in mind for Lasso like Bobby Knight, but the “Saturday Night Live” alum preferred playing over vinegar.

“I had more fun honeying the version of the coach like this,” he said. “The sunny version of me. Like having two beers on an empty stomach, doing some day drinking. There’s enthusiasm. You say, ‘Let’s go for it!’”

Lawrence said the creators were reaching

back to the idea of a moral and kindly American: A good-natured guy with a twinkle in his eye who is smarter than he shows.

“That hadn’t been in the zeitgeist in a while,” Lawrence said. “So it’s fun to try it again.”

Sudeikis said being a father to two young children helped fuel his attempt to create something genuine in these snarky times: “The hopefulness in it was something that I’d just been thinking about and mulling over in my own life.”

“Ted Lasso” arrives when the political discourse in both America and the United Kingdom is often dominated by ignorance married with arrogance. Sudeikis hopes the series can be an antidote.

“Ted is ignorance plus curiosity,” he says. “I think that curiosity has no native tongue. That’s just about staying open and not letting cynicism and apathy and divisiveness rule your decision making.”

Lasso throws himself into local English culture with gusto — downing pints in the pub and adapting to its large cereal — but never joins the British love for tea, which he calls “hot brown water” and “pigeon sweat.”

During the season, he learns more about soccer, but some things continue to elude him, like the rules for offside and the idea of tie games.

“If God wanted games to end in a tie, she wouldn’t have invented numbers,” he says.

Lawrence and Sudeikis both hope the show serves as a valentine to the various mentors in their lives who steered them in the right direction when they were young: “The stuff that sticks with you when you get older is those certain coaches, teachers or influential adults in your life that gave you a little push that you needed. I’m hoping that’s what Ted Lasso ends up being.”

## WEEKEND: HEALTH AND FITNESS

## Do your part: Roll up your sleeves

Experts say flu shots are even more important while the US continues to battle COVID-19

By STACEY BURLING  
The Philadelphia Inquirer

**B**ad as it has been these past few months to live with the danger of the coronavirus, things are about to get worse. Fall is approaching, and with it comes that other respiratory virus that puts thousands of Americans in the hospital every year: influenza.

Prepare for an onslaught of public service messages begging you to get a shot, not only to protect yourself and your vulnerable loved ones but an entire health system already strained by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hospitals often fill up in December and January when flu season really takes off, said Susan Bailey, an allergy and immunology specialist in Fort Worth, Texas, who is president of the American Medical Association.

"If hospitals are already full of coronavirus patients, where are the influenza patients going to go?" she asked. The AMA encourages flu vaccines every year, but will have a larger campaign with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Ad Council this year.

To further complicate matters, the symptoms of the flu and COVID-19 can be so similar that doctors won't be able to tell them apart without testing. A new test that can detect influenza A, influenza B and COVID-19 has received emergency authorization from the FDA but is not yet available. That means patients could need two tests to get a diagnosis.

Doctors need to know which one they're dealing with because there are antiviral medications for the flu. More importantly, people with the coronavirus need to be isolated.

And, doctors know that patients can get the coronavirus and the flu at the same time. They do not know yet whether that results in a worse illness than either would cause alone, but it stands to reason that it might. The flu and the coronavirus tend to be most dangerous for the same groups: the elderly and those with chronic health problems. There isn't a vaccine for the coronavirus yet, she said, but you can do something about the flu.

"We want to make sure we take flu off the table," said L.J. Tan, chief strategy officer for the Immunization Action Committee, a nonprofit that promotes vaccination.

But worries about the coronavirus could make vaccination more challenging, said William Schaffner, medical director for the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) and professor of preventive medicine and infectious diseases at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. Telemedicine can't deliver vaccines, he said, and rates for other types of vaccination have dropped.

"We're very concerned about that," he said. "There's a need to get the flu shot, but there are barriers to actually getting it done."

On the other hand, demand could be unusually high for what may feel like a rare and much-needed act of control. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug manufacturers say they will produce 194 to 198 million doses of vaccine this season, up from 175 million last year.

Here are answers to some questions you may have:



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**When should I get my shot?**

Ideally, doctors said, it's best to wait until September or well into October. Schaffner suggests mid-September to mid-November.

The effectiveness of the shot wanes over time. In most people, it stays strong for six months or so, but people over 65 tend to lose immunity more quickly.

Waiting a little longer to get the shot improves the odds that you'll be protected until the end of the season, which is usually around March or April.

However, it takes two weeks to get the shot's full benefit, so you want to get it before cases become more common in the fall. That's often sometime in November.

If you haven't already gotten sick, you can get shots into the spring. But if it's convenient to get it sooner, especially if you're young and healthy, take it.

"The best time to get the flu vaccine is any time," said Levine, whose agency will start its push around Labor Day.

**Will this be a bad flu season?**

This is unpredictable. Scientists look to countries in the Southern Hemisphere to see which strains of the flu are likely to circulate here.

However, Thomas Fekete, an infectious diseases specialist at Temple University Hospital, said they are not always good for predicting how many cases the U.S. will have because their populations are so different.

So far, Australia, which Tan said increased flu vaccination rates this year, seems to be having a mild season.

Schaffner said Chile and Brazil, countries the U.S. typically watches to predict the flu, are so "awash" in the coronavirus right now that they lack the resources to track the flu.

Measures to prevent COVID-19 — mask wearing, hand washing, social distancing — should reduce spread of the flu as well. The shot is an easy way to add protection.

"This year, we will still see people die as a result of influenza, and we want to prevent as many of those deaths as possible," said Joseph Teel, a family medicine doctor who is vice chair for clinical operations at Penn Medicine.

**Which kind of flu shot should I get?**

Some types protect against three strains of virus (trivalent) and some against four (quadrivalent). Doctors said you should go for quadrivalent if you have a choice. It's recommended that people over 65 get a high-dose version of the shot that works better in older people.

But don't hold out if a particular option isn't available.

"I think the best vaccine for someone," the AMA's Bailey said, "is the one that they're easily able to obtain."

**Who should get a flu shot?**

The shot is recommended for almost everyone over the age of six months.

Fekete said kids should definitely get the shots because they are big flu spreaders. Usually, fewer than half of people eligible for flu shots actually get them, Tan said.

## WEEKEND: FAMILY

## College openings up in the air

Freshman class faces unprecedented levels of uncertainty

By DOUG GEORGE  
Chicago Tribune

There's the adventure of going off to college for the first time, that big, nerve-wracking step toward adulthood that some students have been preparing for their entire high school careers. And then there's going off to college for the first time in 2020.

That is, if this year's freshman class of students are even going off somewhere at all.

As universities in the Chicago area and around the country scramble to resume classes during the COVID-19 pandemic — be that with online coursework, students in class or a hybrid of both — they acknowledge they must plan in particular for this year's freshman class, and figure out how to welcome new students with orientations that in past years would have included weeklong receptions, dorm move-in shindigs and get-to-know-you social events with fellow students.

A number of universities have not yet announced their plans for resuming. Recently, about 24% of American universities said they would have classes fully or primarily in person, 30% online and 15% a hybrid — with 27% still undecided, according to a study of 3,000 institutions published by the Chronicle of Higher Education.

What's more, all this first-year uncertainty affects the same kids who saw the end of their high school senior years upended and graduation ceremonies canceled.

"I just think, like, with the virus, the transition from high school to college is being so hard," said Isabel Kochanek, a recent graduate of Lyons Township High School in La Grange, Ill. She's planning to head to Purdue University Northwest soon for her freshman year, where she'll study biology and health science and play soccer. "Now it's going to be even harder."

Her sister, Sophie Kochanek, is headed off to college for the first time as well, albeit virtually; she'll be a freshman at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, though for the fall semester she'll stay home and take all classes online. In the spring, according to the current thinking, she'll get to be on campus. Online college will feel different than online high school, Sophie said, but mostly for the academics. "I have so much more control over what classes I'm taking, and when I'm taking them," she said. "But it's also definitely not what I expected from college. It's going to be so hard to make friends, get to know my professors."

She chose on-campus in the spring in the hopes there would be a vaccine by then, she said. "Or at least time to figure out how to do college safely."

Purdue University Northwest, with campuses in Hammond and Westville, Ind., is going with a hybrid of online and in-person, so Isabel said she'll be taking about two-thirds of her classes online, one-third in person, particularly those with labs.



ZIONNEW BZDAN, CHICAGO TRIBUNE/TNS

Isabel and Sophie Kochanek, both 18, play with a soccer ball at their home in La Grange, Ill., Aug. 3. Both sisters will be college freshmen in the fall. Sophie is enrolled at Carnegie Mellon, but she'll be taking classes online from home. Isabel is headed to Purdue Northwest in Hammond, Ind., where she plans to live in a dorm and play on the soccer team.

Like most campuses with students live and in-person this fall, everyone at Purdue Northwest will be required to wear masks, practice social distancing and screen themselves daily for coronavirus symptoms. Isabel doesn't yet know for sure if there will be a soccer season.

Gone are the usual freshman student orientations and dorm move-in parties of years past, said Purdue Northwest spokeswoman Kris Falzone. Instead the university has devised a drive-in orientation experience for freshmen and other

Chicago this fall, where she's planning on majoring in musical theater. She'll be living at home with her family in the Brighton Park neighborhood, at least initially, and will be taking some classes online, some in-person, with a 30-minute commute to campus about four times a week.

"I do plan on dorming later," she said. "Maybe next semester."

She knows some people, particularly her age, haven't been careful about the coronavirus, but she has; she has an elderly grandmother living at home and a sibling with a

**Purdue Northwest has devised a drive-in orientation experience. The Welcome Week of rallies and socializing will be virtual and dorm move-ins will be stretched over 15 days.**

incoming new students. They're assigned a day to come to campus and drive through different stations to collect their IDs, a "Flag Bag" of student swag, and get briefings on academics and campus life. The Welcome Week of rallies and socializing will be virtual and dorm move-ins will be stretched over 15 days.

Isabel will be living on campus in a dorm, in a suite with four roommates in two rooms. She had roommates picked out, then was told women soccer players were to live together, then that rule was changed again.

"I don't know; it's just been really confusing and frustrating," Isabel said. She's had moments when she's been excited about going off to school, like when she was shopping with her mom for stuff for her dorm, and other days she has anxiety and wishes she were just staying home with her family. "I just hope every thing works out."

Anna Ries, of Chicago, will be a freshman at Columbia College in

weakened immune system. "I know a lot of people were upset by the cancellation of prom and other big events," she said. "I say precautions are the important thing. And to not be so egocentric."

Daniel Roberts, a graduate of Oak Park and River Forest High School in Oak Park, Ill., is headed off to New York University to live in a dorm, where he'll take some of his classes online, some in-person. As of the moment, it seems likely that he'll have to head to New York soon to quarantine for 14 days before school starts, which will mean the expense of staying at an Airbnb or hotel with his family.

He said he's a little worried about being alone in his single dorm room and taking classes online.

"At the end of high school, I didn't have a lot of drive to do my classes, to tell the truth," he said. "I'm hoping, to be in a New York dorm room situation with other students with the same obligations, it'll help me stay focused. It's my biggest concern right now."

## THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



## How TikTok app cured my FOMO

I'll admit it — I suffer from FOMO when it comes to my kids. My "fear of missing out" has caused me to engage in behaviors that are desperate, annoying and often unbecoming of a mother and military spouse. Which explains why I downloaded TikTok this week.

"You posted another TikTok? What's this one about? Will you show me? Will you play it again?" I'd been nagging our daughter, Anna, for three months, because I didn't have the wildly popular app on my battered, excruciatingly slow Samsung Galaxy 7 Smartphone. Hardly anyone my age uses TikTok, but as the clock ticked on the 45-day divestment deadline imposed against TikTok parent ByteDance by President Trump this month, I knew I had to act or miss my opportunity forever.

As a 2020 recent fashion design graduate, Anna had to put her dreams of working as a fashion designer aside after the retail industry shut down due to coronavirus. While at home, our resourceful and hardworking military child has been creating her own brand of upcycled clothing, promoting her designs on Instagram, DePop, Triller and TikTok. Recently, two of her videos went viral, garnering about a million views each.

Anna is far from becoming a "mega-influencer" — content creators with more than a million regular followers, who can get paid more than \$10,000 per post by brands, musicians and the video apps themselves. In fact, Anna isn't even considered a "micro-influencer" yet, which requires at least 50,000 followers. It's worth trying, though, because in July, TikTok established a \$200 million fund to pay influencers, and plans to increase that to \$1 billion over the next three years. I am Anna's number one fan, cheering like a lunatic mom as I've done for years, "Go, Anna! That's my girl! She's a star! Brownies, anyone?"

Yesterday, I poked "Install TikTok" on my phone's scratched screen, knowing full well the risk that my data could be shared with the Chinese government. This shows how serious my case of FOMO had become — normally, I would overthink the decision and eventually become paralyzed with fear.

Not this time. The security risk TikTok poses is concerning — in January, U.S. military branches banned the app on government-issued phones and discouraged military members from downloading it to their personal phones — but missing out seemed like a bigger threat in the moment. After creating a username and password, the app's iconic music note appeared on my screen. I opened it without hesitation, and in an instant was whisked off to an unknown new world.

Two hours later, I dragged myself away. In that warped time period, I had not only become a new follower of Anna's TikTok account, watched all of her videos twice, liked them all, and commented on a few — I also fell prey to TikTok's unique algorithms, intended to suck consumers into a vortex of continuously streamed video entertainment. Before I knew it, I'd been served a strangely addictive mix of visual snippets — cats dancing hip-hop, people barking something called "cloud bread," teenagers lip-synching to disturbingly profane lyrics, and babies being naturally adorable. I laughed, I cringed, I gasped, I swiped and swiped and swiped.

Apparently, TikTok's genius coders solved the "paradox of choice" problem when they designed the app five years ago. Other apps like Triller, YouTube and Instagram Reels require the consumer to search and self-select videos, but TikTok's algorithms generate a "For You Page" featuring a never-ending stream of content tailored to each user's unique interests and habits. All I had to do was sit back and swipe.

I'll never get those two hours of my life back, but during my TikTok hiatus from reality, I finally learned that, other than my daughter's fashion design videos, I haven't been missing out on all that much. The Chinese government may now own my social security number, but at least they've helped me cure my FOMO.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: [themeatandpotatoesoflife.com](http://themeatandpotatoesoflife.com)  
Email: [meatandpotatoesoflife@googlemail.com](mailto:meatandpotatoesoflife@googlemail.com)



# WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

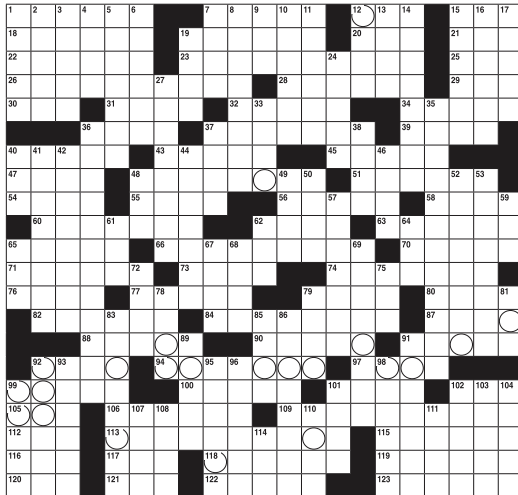
## NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

### CRAFT SHOW

BY RUTH BLOOMFIELD MARGOLIN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

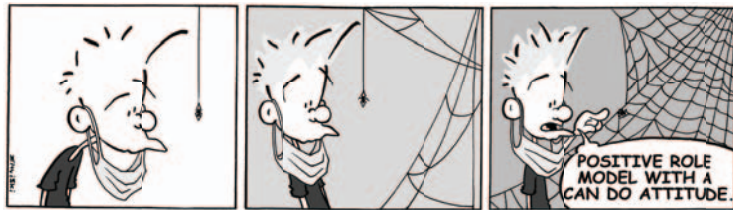
Ruth Bloomfield Margolin, of Westfield, N.J., serves on the boards of several community nonprofit groups. For the past three years she has given talks at area libraries on crossword construction — lately adding Zoom presentations to her repertoire. Ruth created a crossword for her son's July wedding (now postponed), which included the couple's favorite board game, Pandemic. Whoops! She's revealing that puzzle now to feature only "fun" things. —W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Front
- 7 Spanish rice
- 12 Little sucker?
- 15 Smallish batteries
- 18 Like a seacoast after a storm, maybe
- 19 Ferris Bueller's girlfriend
- 20 \_\_\_\_ B. Wells, civil rights pioneer
- 21 \_\_\_\_mo
- 22 S as in soup?
- 23 Kind of drawing
- 25 Icarus's downfall
- 26 Skip work for health reasons
- 28 Words after "Ooh, ooh!"
- 29 Beau, to Brigitte
- 30 Verbal stumbles
- 31 Baseball catcher
- 32 Ire
- 34 Boy band with two members who previously starred on "The Mickey Mouse Club"
- 36 Little suckers
- 37 Headgear for a tallgater
- 39 One of the Amazons
- 40 "...but it's up to you"
- 43 Famously green shampoo
- 45 Rap's Shakur
- 47 Pope after Benedict IV
- 48 Winter vacation destination
- 51 Parades
- 54 Barely beat
- 55 Goals
- 56 Silverback gorilla, e.g.
- 58 Marcos with a Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony
- 60 Drag-racing vehicles
- 62 "\_\_\_\_ trap!"
- 63 Meager
- 65 Tired
- 66 In perfect order ... or, as two words, what's formed by applying the answers for the five italicized clues to the circled letters
- 70 Dined at home
- 71 More skeptical
- 73 "Hamilton" actor \_\_\_\_ Jr.
- 74 Break down, to a Brit
- 76 Theory
- 77 Sea
- 79 Prefix with "plasm"
- 80 Piece paid by Pisans for a piece of pizza, previously
- 82 Safe places
- 84 Multi-episode narrative
- 87 Crucifix inscription
- 88 Relentlessly question
- 90 En \_\_\_\_ (as a whole)
- 91 Having tattoos
- 92 Event that's a bit off?
- 94 The butler, stereotypically
- 97 It gives Ford an "F"; Abbr.
- 99 Buff
- 100 First Alaskan on a major U.S. party ticket
- 101 E-4, E-5 and E-6, in the U.S. Navy, in brief
- 102 Successors to LPs
- 105 Part of Canada above Alta, and Sack.
- 106 One of the Gandhis
- 109 Where to get a mullet trimmed
- 112 "\_\_\_\_ get it now!"
- 113 Civic center
- 115 Colored ring
- 116 Washington's Sea- \_\_\_\_ Airport
- 117 Not's opposite
- 118 Ban ... or bandit
- 119 By and large
- 120 College entrance exam org.
- 121 Hoop, V.I.R.s
- 122 Author Zora \_\_\_\_ Houston
- 123 Son of Aphrodite
- DOWN**
- 1 Complete in one leg of a modern pentathlon
- 2 Loud, as the surf
- 3 Chills
- 4 Not incl.
- 5 Set the boundaries of
- 6 Perfect
- 7 Smart \_\_\_\_
- 8 Painter of the "Four Freedoms" series, 1943
- 9 Sound from a cheering crowd
- 10 Even
- 11 Pinnacle
- 12 \_\_\_\_ Chemical
- Company, onetime maker of VapoRub
- 13 Writer Server of The Atlantic
- 14 Event planner's need
- 15 Attempts
- 16 They're listed by degrees
- 17 \_\_\_\_ boom
- 19 Struck, old-style
- 24 Bygone Apple messaging app
- 27 Members of a blended family
- 33 Move, in Realtor jargon
- 35 Airport logjam
- 36 Rick, Isa and Victor had one in "Casablanca"
- 37 First lady between Eleanor and Mamie
- 38 Fanny
- 40 Accented cheer
- 41 Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy, for two
- 42 Restricted zone
- 44 "Ba-dum-tss"
- 46 Education support grps.
- 48 \_\_\_\_ Paulo, Brazil
- 49 Sea route, e.g.
- 50 "Frozen" queen
- 52 Endless YouTube viewing, e.g.
- 53 French island off the coast of Newfoundland
- 57 Tropical yellow fruits
- 59 Writer Rand
- 61 New York city with a marina
- 62 Suffix with tour or Tory
- 64 \_\_\_\_-El (Superman's birth name)
- 65 Conflict during which the Lusitania was sunk; Abbr.
- 67 Fateful date
- 68 What's left at sea
- 69 Dig in
- 72 Flat, round bread cooked on a griddle
- 75 Noted congresswoman from the Bronx, familiarly
- 78 After-bath application
- 79 Anatomical sac
- 81 Hoped for response to an SOS
- 83 Lien holder, e.g.
- 85 Ahab's father in the Bible
- 86 Desert's lack
- 89 Hogwarts professor who was secretly a werewolf
- 91 "Awkward Black Girl" creator and star
- 92 "Who cares?"
- 93 Slapstick silliness
- 95 Gary who created "The Far Side"
- 96 Award to be hung
- 98 Start of a playground joke
- 99 U.S. govt. bond
- 101 Compass letters
- 102 Unisex fragrance
- 103 \_\_\_\_ Street, Perry Mason's secretary
- 104 Strong ropes used to support masts
- 107 Verb precursor
- 108 Bad things on motorists' records, for short
- 110 "Dies \_\_\_\_" (hymn)
- 111 Curb, with "in"
- 114 The Jazz, on scoreboards



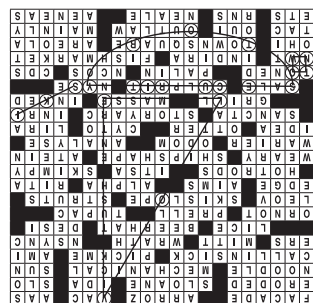
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## GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at [gunstonstreet@yahoo.com](mailto:gunstonstreet@yahoo.com), and online at [gunstonstreet.com](http://gunstonstreet.com).

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## OPINION

## Syria's worst refugee camp now at risk for COVID-19

By JOSH ROGIN

The Washington Post

Just 10 miles away from a U.S. military base in Syria, 8,000 people are starving to death, besieged on all sides, and cut off from any food or medicine or other aid, in a camp called Rukban. Yet this isolation had one benefit: It protected them from the added calamity of a COVID-19 outbreak. Now, however, Jordan is deporting its Syrian refugees directly into Rukban, some of whom could be bringing the virus back to their homeland with them.

There are lots of tragic stories in Syria, but few match the sheer horror and hopelessness of the internally displaced civilians in this southeast Syrian camp, which is protected by a nearby U.S. military outpost from the Bashar Assad regime as well as Russian and Iranian forces. There are no roads out and no roads in. The last United Nations aid convoy arrived with the month's worth of food over a year ago. The Assad regime and its allies are using starvation as a weapon of war, which is a war crime. The U.S. military recruits partner forces from the camp, but the U.S. government won't feed the residents.

There used to be some 30,000 people in the camp, who fled there from all parts of Syria. Thousands have since returned to regime-held areas (the only option other than starvation), where they faced detention, torture, conscription or execution. Subsisting on smuggled morsels, the remaining residents have waged a public campaign to beg the United States and the international community for help. But it has fallen on deaf ears.

Now, to make matters worse, the Jordanian government has been forcibly repatriating refugees from camps inside Jordan, dumping them in Rukban with no food or aid, according to camp leaders and activists. By doing so, they are potentially ex-

## Jordan's deportation of refugees to the Rukban camp is just the latest in the residents' long list of crises.

posing the thousands of existing residents to a pandemic they have no means to deal with.

"We fear that they carry COVID-19 or other sicknesses to our camp, which is isolated and doesn't have any outbreaks right now," one Rukban community leader, who goes by the name Abu Khalid al-Humsi, told me. "And if coronavirus does come to our camp, we have no way to protect ourselves. It would be a catastrophe."

Over the past month, the Jordanian government has dropped off several dozen Syrian refugees who had been in Jordan for years, he said. They came from the Azraq refugee camp and a camp called the Third Village. Rukban residents are hearing there could be several hundred more deported out of Jordan and arriving in Rukban in the coming weeks.

"None are quarantined by Jordan before they send them to us. Jordanians send no aid whatsoever," al-Humsi told me. "There is no aid from the Americans to the camp. We have no humanitarian aid or medical aid or any sort of aid. Thank God we don't have any COVID cases."

The Jordanian Embassy did not respond to a request for comment. The Jordanian government has not communicated with the Rukban camp residents, who are scrambling to isolate the new arrivals while trying to find them shelter and food at the same time. Jordan closed the U.N. clinic on their side of the border in March and has since refused requests to allow to call an emergency medical "hotline" in Jordan, but no one has ever picked up or responded.

## Pardoning Snowden only helps Putin, Mr. President

By MICHAEL MORELL  
and MIKE VICKERS

Special to The Washington Post

In an interview with the New York Post in the Oval Office on Aug. 13, President Donald Trump said he would consider pardoning Edward Snowden. He repeated the idea two days later at a news conference.

In classic Trump fashion, the president said, referring to Snowden, "there are a lot of people that think that he is not being treated fairly. I mean, I hear that."

This is a reversal for Trump, who tweeted at least 45 times before taking office to denounce Snowden as a traitor and call for his execution. (In a 2013 tweet, Trump wrote, "Snowden is a spy who should be executed but if it could reveal Obama's (birth) records, I might become a major fan.")

While some Americans would support a Snowden pardon, it is clear they don't make up Trump's political base, and it strains credibility to suggest that this all is one Trump reaches across the aisle on, as many Democrats would also oppose this action.

So, why is the president considering it, and why now, less than 80 days from the election? Are some of the people Trump is hearing from sitting in the White House?

As former intelligence officers, we ask this question because the major beneficiary of a Snowden pardon, other than Snowden himself, would be Vladimir Putin. It would certainly not be the American people and U.S. national security, and certainly not the U.S. intelligence community. The pardon would also benefit China; Snowden

first fled to Hong Kong with his trove of pilfered classified documents.

Russia's intelligence services have long obtained all the U.S. intelligence secrets Snowden could share in return for receiving political asylum in Moscow. Pardoning Snowden would remove the burden from Putin of providing sanctuary to an American traitor and send a signal to any other would-be Snowdens in the U.S. intelligence community that such actions might be forgiven.

So, when Trump says he is "hearing from a lot of people," it is only fair to ask, who?

In his interview with the New York Post, Trump raised the topic and then asked aides what they thought, which should have made anyone charged with protecting U.S. national security immediately uncomfortable. Why would he want to do Russia's bidding and further damage America's national security?

Snowden is not a whistleblower. He was a government contractor who leaked millions of documents that covered U.S. intelligence operations and relations with foreign governments well beyond the two terrorist-related surveillance programs he says he found so troubling. Snowden made no effort to use the dissent or whistleblower channels that were open to him. Had he done so, he would have learned that the programs he was worried about did not mean the U.S. government was listening to the phone calls and reading the emails of American citizens.

Snowden took credit for his leaks only after he was overseas in the hands of Chinese, and then Russian, intelligence operatives. Snowden's leaks did grave damage to

the national security of the United States.

Contrast Snowden's actions with those of Daniel Ellsberg, who, after illegally providing the Pentagon Papers (U.S. government policy deliberations and assessments of the Vietnam War) to The New York Times, turned himself into the U.S. Attorney's Office. The only way Snowden should return to the United States is to face a jury of his peers.

Also, contrast Trump's remarks with President Bill Clinton's decision not to pardon Jonathan Pollard, who spied for Israel during the 1980s. In 1998, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu requested that Clinton release Pollard as part of the deal. Clinton considered the ask. But, then-Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet told Clinton that if Pollard were released, he would resign. Tenet, foreseeing a sharp reaction from his officers if Pollard were set free, told Clinton he could not walk back into his building again if Pollard were part of the deal. (Pollard served 30 years and was eventually pardoned in 2015.)

We are certain that Trump's national security advisers will argue against a Snowden pardon. If they fail to convince the president — as they have on so many other issues — some leaders of the intelligence community will likely resign, just as Tenet was willing to do nearly a quarter-century ago. Putin will have won another round, and America's security will be diminished.

Do not pardon Edward Snowden, Mr. President.

Michael Morell served as deputy director of the CIA from 2010 to 2013 and twice as its acting director. Mike Vickers served as undersecretary of defense for intelligence from 2011 to 2015.



## OPINION

## What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other stateside syndicates.

## Biden's economic plan repeats Dems' destructive practices

**The Wall Street Journal**  
The Democratic convention case against President Donald Trump boils down to COVID and character, and the polls suggest it's working. But the bigger issue next year will be reviving the economy from the shutdown recession, and on that score the Democrats are mostly quiet. Perhaps that's because Joe Biden is promising to repeat the same policy mix that produced the slowest recovery in modern times during the Obama years. The record is worth examining.

Biden's cheerleaders declare the Obama administration a smashing economic success, but say the country's deepest recession since the Great Depression, and handed Trump the longest expansion on record. Barack Obama did get some things right. He tolerated the shale energy revolution that emerged on his watch, albeit on private land. Late in his term he did try to strangle it by imposing a moratorium. Despite conflicting instincts on major policy, he also pushed for progress on trade policy and made deals with Europe and around the Pacific.

But the overall economic numbers tell a negative story. Annual economic growth, adjusted for inflation, averaged 1.6% over the recession ended in June 2009 and Obama's two terms. Despite the length of the post-2009 expansion, it was shallow.

Sluggish growth went hand-in-hand with the worst labor recovery in generations. The unemployment rate peaked at 10% in October 2009 and didn't reach the pre-recession level of 4.6% until March 2017. That painfully slow healing overstates the improvement since so many Americans dropped out of the workforce.

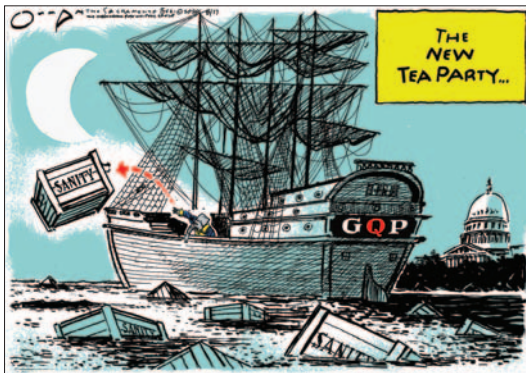
The labor participation rate — roughly, the percentage of working-age adults working or actively seeking work — fell to 62% when Obama left office in January 2017 from 66.2% in January 2008 at the onset of the recession. The participation rate for men of prime working age (25-54) never rose much above 88% throughout Obama's tenure, by far its lowest rate since records began in 1948.

Obama's contribution was to make the Main Street recovery more difficult with mistakes the Biden Democrats seem set on repeating. Chief among these was the \$800 billion "stimulus" spending bill in 2009 that was supposed to galvanize a rapid recovery. But the shovel-ready projects weren't ready. Most of the money went to private and social-worker transfer payments that did nothing to change incentives to work and invest.

The payments also penalized work in the name of supporting laid-off workers. One signature policy was a significant extension of unemployment benefits, to 99 weeks of pay, plus a bonus to work long after the recession ended. Sound familiar? Measures ranging from expanded eligibility for food stamps to means-tested subsidies for mortgage borrowing punished people who worked more.

Casey Mulligan of the University of Chicago put up the various benefits and estimated the marginal tax rate created by the phase-out of benefits as workers earned more rose to 48% from 40% before the recession. Mulligan argues these labor-market distortions bear most of the responsibility for the depth and length of what he calls the "redistribution recession."

Another lesson is how quickly the Obama



Democrats pivoted from recovery to social revolutions and how destructive that pivot was. With the Affordable Care Act, Obama and Speaker Nancy Pelosi reorganized one-sixth of the economy. The law's combination of tax hikes, regulatory dictates and the uncertainty attendant on "passing the law to learn what's in it" hobbled the recovery.

Now Biden is promising to repeat this, but on a grander scale in health care and his version of a Green New Deal. The economic manifesto his policy team co-authored with staffers from the Bernie Sanders campaign promises to install 500 million solar panels in five years, eliminate carbon emissions from power plants, and replace every school bus with a green model. The document doesn't explicitly ban fossil-fuel production but it promises new rules that will raise costs and curtail it.

Note that one political consequence of these policy failures was to lean more heavily on monetary policy to salvage a recovery from Obama's bad instincts, and the Federal Reserve created distortions to do so.

By refusing to normalize monetary policy after the financial panic ended, the Ben Bernanke-Janet Yellen Fed inflated asset bubbles on stock exchanges, in corporate debt markets, urban property markets, and other parts of the world. These booms mainly benefited asset owners at the expense of wage earners and entrepreneurs. The result was a damaging form of inequality, new in America, that rewarded asset ownership or political connections instead of innovation and hard work.

Even with the Fed's exertions, the economy slowed in 2015 and nearly fell into recession. Growth in the last six quarters of the Obama presidency averaged less than 1.9%. This helped Trump make the case that the Obama expansion had left behind working people.

The Biden economic plan is best understood as Obamanomics pulled left by Sanders. He'd raise taxes by \$3 trillion by his count — about \$4 trillion by independent calculations. His spending plans run to at least \$7.4 trillion, conservatively estimated. His labor proposals are the most pro-union since the 1935 Wagner Act. Regulations on health care, energy, transportation, technology and finance will multiply, often with a priority of reducing racial inequities rather than increasing opportunity.

The U.S. economy will have a growth spurt in 2021 as the pandemic ends no matter who wins the election. But over time these destructive policies will inevitably lead to slower growth. The Fed will be called to do even more, perhaps including bond purchases of private companies and modern monetary theory's debt monetization. Asset holders will benefit more than wage earners.

This may not matter in the election, since Democrats and Donald Trump both

want to make this a referendum on Donald Trump. But voters should be under no illusions about what they're buying in the Biden agenda, and under no fog of amnesia concerning what happened the last time.

## QAnon can do damage beyond its misguided adherents

**The Washington Post**

Twitter announced last month that it had removed thousands of accounts spreading messages about QAnon. Days later, TikTok blocked hashtags that corresponded to QAnon videos. And early this month, Facebook removed a QAnon group with 100,000 members. All of which led many Americans to ask the question: What on earth is QAnon?

Unfortunately, this question isn't so easy to answer. QAnon is a conspiracy theory involving a "deep state" of child molesters (and child-eaters) who worship the devil and run this country's most sinister institutions. It originates with an anonymous persona called Q who claims to possess a top-level security clearance used to access government secrets about a vast left-wing plot against President Donald Trump. Yet from there, the theory has sprawled across the internet, offering various versions of differing degrees of bizarreness luring the susceptible reader down a rabbit hole — and tempting the outside observer to ignore the wackiness altogether. Except ignoring QAnon isn't an option.

Not only has QAnon led to intense online harassment of innocent parties, and not only has it led to physical violence, but Americans also can't ignore QAnon because adherents to some form of the theory may soon represent them in Congress. More than 60 candidates this fall have expressed their sympathies with the cause. Fourteen have clinched a place on the ballot. Trump himself has been known to retweet QAnon-adjacent content, and last Friday, when he was asked about the phenomenon, he sidestepped the inquiry. This sent believers into paroxysms.

That QAnon is tipping ever closer to the political mainstream is only one of many challenges for social media sites. These sites can't ignore QAnon, but neither can they simply ban it — not really. Platforms tend to prefer to focus on behavior rather than content, so they have ready-made recourse in their terms of service when they want to act against manipulation of algorithms or tactics such as "swarming" or "astroturfing." But the more the conspiracy theory for, say, being baby-eaters). When platforms do focus on content, they are far more likely to act when there is a risk of real-world harm. QAnon has caused real-world harm, surely. But not every post related to the theory runs the risk of triggering the moderators' mallet could needlessly squelch speech

— perhaps fueling the same accusations of a scheming liberal conglomerate that are the movement's *raison d'être*. And even if platforms did decide QAnon as a whole was too much of a menace to countenance, they'd run into trouble determining which posts qualified.

QAnon is poised to act as a test case for the uncolored rules and enforcement apparatuses social media sites have developed over their yearslong shift toward taking responsibility. These technology companies will need to navigate the labyrinths they themselves have constructed. They should also explain to the rest of us the routes they are taking. All the while, they'll confront a painful reality: the loss of their power to resolve. The president isn't an accidental beneficiary of these conspiracy-mongers. He is egging them on.

## A century of American women voting hasn't brought equality

**Los Angeles Times**

A woman named Shelly Tolhurst offered a sadly prophetic observation at a Sept. 7, 1920, event in Los Angeles celebrating the passage of a constitutional amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote. It was a thousand years ago and a certain view of the world was dismaying, as we are, that in 2020 women are subjected to the same sexist insults that were hurled at the suffragists who dared to suggest they should be treated as equals?

Perhaps they could imagine it. After all, it had taken more than 70 years of struggle to get the 19th Amendment ratified. Suffrage movement was birthed in 1848 during a meeting of like-minded women and men in Seneca Falls, N.Y., and might have faltered but for the determination of generations of women, including the courageous Black women whose contributions were too often overlooked by the history books. It wasn't until Aug. 18, 1920, when Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify it, that the 19th Amendment met the constitutional minimum for passage. (California had enfranchised its female citizens nearly a decade earlier; indeed, 21 U.S. states allowed women to vote as early as 1918.)

But it is likely that Tolhurst and her cohort would nevertheless be gratified to see that tremendous progress has been made with the help of women's voting power, even if true equality is still a long way off. There are laws requiring equal access to education and banning employment discrimination on the basis of sex. The Belmont, authored by suffragist leader Alice Paul in 1923, has finally secured the ratification of the crucial 38th state needed for passage (though it is still mired in challenges because of an expired deadline).

A hundred and three years after Montezuma sent the first woman to Congress — Jeannette Rankin, a Republican and progressive (political parties have changed a bit over the last century as well) — 127 women currently serve in the U.S. House and Senate. Three female jurists sit on U.S. Supreme Court. On Wednesday night, a woman sent the first woman to Congress, but also Asian, became the Democrats' vice presidential nominee. And it is women who are seen as pivotal swing voters in the presidential election.

The political, social and economic parity the suffragists dreamed about a century ago has been long delayed, but it is coming. Let's not put it off any longer.

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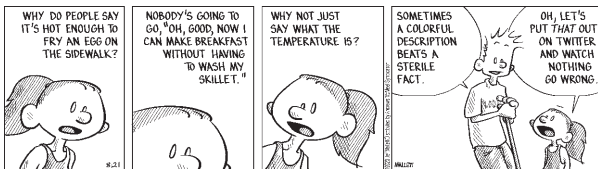


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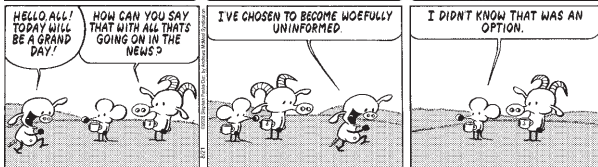




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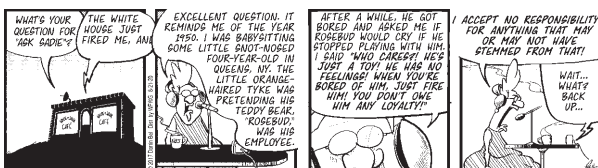
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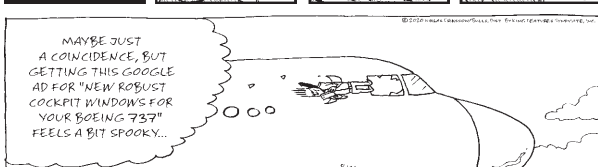
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## Non Sequitur



Candorville



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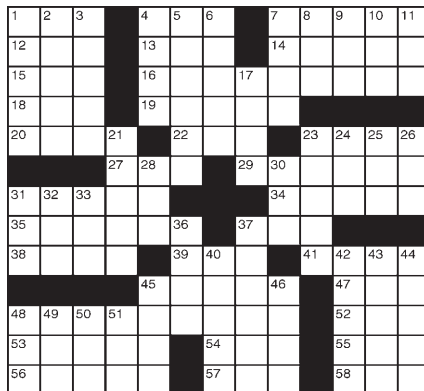


**etle Bailey**



carro

## Eugene Sheffer Crossword



**ACROSS**

- 1 Gridlock
- 4 Wager
- 7 Names in a will
- 12 Docs' org.
- 13 Blunder
- 14 "The Jetsons"  
boy
- 15 Guest's bed
- 16 Phone message
- 18 Scrap
- 19 Relinquish
- 20 Tavern order
- 22 Hit CBS series
- 23 Sugar or starch,  
for short
- 27 Clean air org.
- 29 Imitate
- 31 Temple leader
- 34 Reeves of  
"Speed"
- 35 Chirps
- 37 "Cheers"

- |                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 57 Tours season              | Parseghian         |
| 58 Since Jan. 1              | 25 Director Howard |
| <b>DOWN</b>                  | 26 A/C measure     |
| 1 Essau's brother            | 28 Deep hole       |
| 2 Love, <i>Italian-style</i> | 30 Alias abbr.     |
| 3 Not glossy                 | 31 GPS suggestion  |
| 4 Group of quail             | 32 Piercing tool   |
| 5 Beethoven's                | 33 Arthur of       |
| Third                        | "Maude"            |
| 6 Samples                    | 36 Bridge coup     |
| 7 Obey                       | 37 Quick run       |
| 8 Stately tree               | 40 Humiliate       |
| 9 A Gershwin                 | 42 Pious           |
| brother                      | 43 Metal fastener  |
| 10 Marseilles                | 44 Threw in        |
| monarch                      | 45 Venetian        |
| 11 Wd. division              | blind part         |
| 17 Film fragment             | 46 Skin soother    |
| 21 Defy authority            | 48 Utter           |
| 23 Espresso foam             | 49 Formerly called |
| 24 Notre Dame's              | 50 — standstill    |
|                              | 51 Connections     |

### Answer to Previous Puzzle



## 8-21

## CRYPTOQUIP

KGFL VIT YFMFBFY CGPHIL'C

PJBELD CJFLFC WHIR BGPB

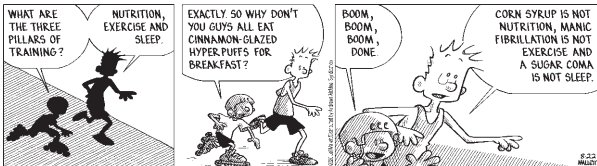
W E M R ,   V I T   B I I O   P M M   B G F

DMFCC KIHO ITB IW EB.

**Yesterday's Cryptoquip:** HAVING MANY PILES OF UNPAID BILLS IS TRAGIC. HOWEVER, MY OUTCOME IS A FATE WORSE THAN DEBT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals W

Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



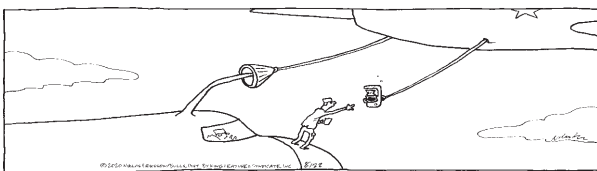
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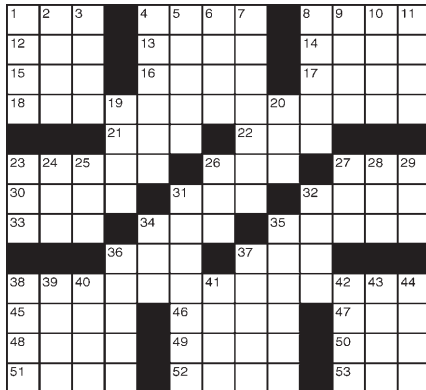
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



# Eugene Sheffer Crossword



## ACROSS

- 1 Physique
- 4 Herding dog's name
- 8 Spill the beans
- 12 Paris pal
- 13 Havana's land
- 14 Suffix for billion
- 15 Hostel
- 16 Actor Epps
- 17 Jewels
- 18 1932 William Faulkner novel
- 21 Timetable abbr.
- 22 Parched
- 23 Tower material?
- 26 "Gandhi" star Kingsley
- 27 Up to
- 30 Peruse
- 31 Tank filler
- 32 Travel permit
- 33 Fixed
- 34 Gore and Green
- 35 Records
- 36 — Jima
- 37 Use a straw
- 38 Seasonal employees
- 45 Now, in a memo
- 46 "American —"
- 47 Tic-tac-toe win
- 48 "Arbitrage" actor Richard
- 49 Drifting ice
- 50 Resort
- 51 Like some vaccines

- 52 Slangy OKs
- 53 "A mouse!"

- 26 Some coll. degrees
- 27 Bit of advice
- 28 British verb ending
- 29 Opener at Vegas?
- 31 Extol
- 32 Smoke an e-cig
- 34 Shock partner
- 35 Championships
- 36 Spur on
- 37 Be nosy
- 38 Palm starch
- 39 — friendly
- 40 Kate of "The Martian"
- 41 Not busy
- 42 American Beauty, e.g.
- 43 "Uh-uh"
- 44 Drench

## Answer to Previous Puzzle



8-22

## CRYPTOQUIP

X I I J S Z , G P C P V N J P X

F H R E G J S Z H X K M F V N E M S H R

J Y S Z H X N C S Z L G M Y H S K V J I

S Z H X P Y : X M S P V Y X Z H H S X .

**Yesterday's Cryptoquip:** WHEN YOU DELETED SHARON'S ACTING SCENES FROM THAT FILM, YOU TOOK ALL THE GLESS WORK OUT OF IT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals X



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## Pro soccer

MLS									
EASTERN CONFERENCE					WESTERN CONFERENCE				
W	L	T	Pts	GF	W	L	T	Pts	GF
Columbus	4	0	1	13	9	1	0	1	3
Toronto FC	2	0	2	12	7	1	0	1	3
Orlando City	2	0	2	12	7	1	0	1	3
Philadelphia	2	1	1	7	5	1	0	1	3
Montreal	2	1	1	7	5	1	0	1	3
New York	2	1	1	7	5	1	0	1	3
Atlanta	2	1	1	7	5	1	0	1	3
New England	1	1	3	6	4	1	0	1	3
Cincinnati	1	1	3	6	4	1	0	1	3
D.C. United	1	2	2	5	6	1	0	1	3
Nashville SC	1	2	1	4	2	1	0	1	3
Chicago	1	2	1	4	2	1	0	1	3
New York City FC	1	2	1	4	2	1	0	1	3
Inter Miami CF	1	2	1	4	2	1	0	1	3

**WESTERN CONFERENCE**  
**Portland** 2-0-2 12 6  
**San Jose** 2-0-2 12 6  
**Colorado** 2-0-2 12 6  
**Vancouver** 2-0-2 12 6  
**Real Salt Lake** 1-1-3 6 3  
**San Diego** 1-1-3 6 3  
**Houston** 0-2-3 3 11  
**Seattle** 0-2-3 3 11

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

**Tuesday, Aug. 18**  
 Toronto FC vs. Vancouver 0  
**Thursday's game**  
 New York City FC at New York 0  
 Philadelphia at Columbus 0  
**Friday's game**  
 D.C. United at Cincinnati 0  
 Sporting Kansas City at Minnesota 0  
 Dallas at Houston 0  
 Vancouver at Toronto FC 0  
 LA Galaxy at Los Angeles FC 0  
 Nashville at Atlanta 0  
 Orlando City at Miami 0  
 Real Salt Lake at Colorado 0  
**Sunday's game**  
 Seattle at Portland 0

**Pro basketball**

**WNBA**

EASTERN CONFERENCE									
W	L	T	Pct	GB	W	L	T	Pct	GB
Chicago	8	4	.667	-	Seattle	18	3	.857	-
Connecticut	5	7	.417	1	Los Angeles	18	3	.857	-
Indiana	7	7	.500	2	Minnesota	18	3	.857	-
Washington	4	4	.333	3	Phoenix	18	3	.857	-
New York	2	10	.167	6	Dallas	18	3	.857	-

**WESTERN CONFERENCE**

W	L	T	Pct	GB
Seattle	18	3	.857	-
Los Angeles	18	3	.857	-
Minnesota	18	3	.857	-
Phoenix	18	3	.857	-
Dallas	18	3	.857	-

**Wednesday's games**

88, Atlanta 91, Phoenix 74

**Thursday's games**

Chicago at New York 0, Indiana 0

**Friday's games**

Los Angeles at Atlanta 0, Washington at Dallas 0

**Saturday's games**

Seattle vs. Vegas 0, Indiana at Connecticut 0

**Golf**

**Charles Schwab Series**

**Champions Tour**

at Buffalo Ridge Par 71

Hollister, Mo.

Yardage: 7,036; Par: 71

**First Round**

Tom Lehman 33-31-64-7

Shane Bertsch 33-31-64-7

Jim Furyk 33-31-64-7

Wes Short, Jr. 33-31-64-7

David Toms 33-31-64-7

Kent Jones 33-31-64-7

Michael Allen 33-31-64-7

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**Saturday's games**

## BOXING/GOLF



STEVE MARCUS, LAS VEGAS SUN/AP

Shawn Porter, right, works on his timing with his father and trainer Kenny Porter on Aug. 15, 2018 in Las Vegas. Shawn has been working exclusively with Kenny during the pandemic lockdown.

## Commentary

# For Porter, beating up dad was just the start

By TIM DAHLBERG  
Associated Press

**T**he coronavirus pandemic-caused lockdown had just begun, and former welterweight champion Shawn Porter needed a place to train.

No problem. Kenny Porter hung a heavy bag from a tree in his backyard for his son to hit.

It wasn't long before Shawn Porter needed a sparring partner he knew was COVID-19 free.

No problem. Kenny Porter laced on a pair of gloves.

"None of us were comfortable with having anyone come over," Shawn Porter said. "My dad said:

'Hey, you've got to spar. I'll be your partner until we get this figured out.'"

For three weeks, the Porters mixed it up in a makeshift backyard ring. In 100-degree Las Vegas heat, they sparred twice a week until Kenny Porter finally decided it was time for a father-son talk.

"Each time we sparred I did a little better," Kenny Porter said. "I guess he saw my levels start to rise and the dude just started to tee off on me again. I finally went to his corner and said, 'If you beat up your sparring partner you're not going to have anyone to spar with.'"

Kenny Porter should have

known better to begin with. He taught his son to fight only one way, no matter who was in the ring against him.

Even his dad.

"It was great work and great moments in the ring," Shawn Porter said. "In some capacity I wasn't looking forward to it because I can't go all-out. I mean, he is my dad. I think I did that twice and he finally said, save it for the fight, save it for the ring."

The real fight comes Saturday night when Porter returns to the ring for the first time in nearly a year, taking on Germany's Sebastian Formella at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles. The bout is the main event of a card televised by the Fox network.

Kenny Porter will be in his son's corner, as he has been since he first put on gloves at the age of 4. Father-son teams are nothing new in boxing, but the Porters stand out because of how successful they've been and how close they remain.

So close that Shawn Porter lived in his father's house until he was 28. So close that, now married and with two sons of his own, Shawn Porter bought a house in December across the street from his father even though he already lived nearby.

"He was just two (traffic) lights away from me before, but he wanted to be across the street," Kenny Porter said. "He said, 'I thought it would be cool to walk over to your house and see you any time.'"

## On the fringe

# Top seed meaningless in FedEx Cup playoffs

By DOUG FERGUSON  
Associated Press

**NORTON, Mass.** — No longer No. 1 in the world, Justin Thomas at least is No. 1 in the FedEx Cup standings.

Neither is relevant as the PGA Tour goes into its lucrative post-season, and Thomas need only to review history — whether it's last year or the last decade — to appreciate that.

Nothing illustrates the depth and parity in golf more than the fact that Thomas is the eighth player in the last eight years to start the FedEx Cup playoffs as the No. 1 seed. He was preceded by Brooks Koepka, Dustin Johnson, Hideki Matsuyama, Jason Day, Jordan Spieth, Rory McIlroy and Tiger Woods.

Only one of them — Spieth in 2015 — went on to capture the cup and its eight-figure bonus.

Spieth missed the cut in consecutive weeks, finished 11 shots behind in the third event and then — stop if you've heard this one before — he made putts from all over East Lake to win the Tour Championship.

It's even more difficult now because of a restructured finale that features a staggered start. The No. 1 seed going into East Lake is at 10 under with a two-shot lead before hitting a shot, all the way down to the last of the 30 qualifiers at even par.

Thomas was the top seed a year ago and was spotted a two-shot lead. Even though it was his worst scoring performance of the post-season, he wasn't seriously out of contention until the final day. McIlroy wound up winning the \$15 million prize.

Thomas said it felt weird to be leading before he started. He'd still rather be in that spot than having to make up ground, and that means playing well over the next two weeks in The Northern Trust outside Boston and the BMW Championship outside Chicago.

"I felt like if I put myself in that position again, I'll handle it a lot

better," Thomas said Tuesday.

Then again, nothing about this year feels similar.

Points are worth triple, not quadruple, because the PGA Tour lost 13 events to the COVID-19 pandemic. That means less volatility — only 19 players have a mathematical chance of taking over the No. 1 seed this week at The Northern Trust, compared with 72 players had this event been won four times as many points.

And then there's the tricky part of getting the game to peak at just the right time.

Players typically would love for that to happen four times a year in the majors — three times this year with the British Open being canceled — and it has worked for the likes of Billy Horschel in 2014. He remains the only FedEx Cup champion to start the postseason outside the top 50. He was at No. 69 and was runner-up and won twice in a three-week stretch.

"You're trying to get ready for one week in a major," Thomas said. "Whereas here, I'm not trying to peak this week. I'm trying to kind of start the upward climb to hopefully be peaking come Saturday, Sunday, Monday in Atlanta."

It all leads to Atlanta, and it's ultimately about cash.

Prestige requires time, and 13 years of the FedEx Cup isn't enough. What will help move it along is the influx of youth that don't know anything different.

Thomas was only 14 when the FedEx Cup began in 2007.

Jon Rahm, who returned to No. 1 in the world, was a 12-year-old in Spain when Woods won the first FedEx Cup.

"I remember the whole thing. I know I remember knowing what they were playing for," Rahm said. "Luckily, I've been able to make a lot of income for somebody my age. But I've never played golf for money. I played it for the enjoyment and the winning and trying to be the best. That's what the FedEx Cup is — when you play good when you need to, right?"



FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP

Shawn Porter, right, punches Danny Garcia during their WBC welterweight championship bout on Sept. 8, 2018 in New York.



CHARLES KRUPA/AP

Justin Thomas is the top seed going into the FedEx Cup playoffs, just as he was a year ago when Rory McIlroy wound up winning.



**BATTING**—Blackmon, Colorado, .426; Solano, San Francisco, .386; Winker, Cincinnati, .357; Goldschmidt, St. Louis, .349;

## MLB

## Briefly

## Pujols passes A-Rod for 2nd on career RBI list

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Albert Pujols tied Alex Rodriguez for second place on the career RBI list with a single in the sixth inning of the Los Angeles Angels' game against the San Francisco Giants on Wednesday night.

Pujols' hit off Andrew Suarez drove in Anthony Rendon as part of the Angels' two-run inning. It's the 2,086th RBI of Pujols' career.

Former home run king Hank Aaron holds the record with 2,297.

Pujols, 40, remains one home run shy of 660 for his career, which would tie him with Willie Mays for fifth.

Due to the uncertain nature of record keeping in the early part of the 20th century, some discrepancies exist between the stats provided today by different historical data providers. For example, some sources list Ruth as having 2,214 RBIs, while others have him at 2,213.

Pujols, a three-time MVP and 10-time All-Star, is the only member of the 650-homer, 650-double club.



BEN MARROTT/AP

Los Angeles Angels' Albert Pujols tied Alex Rodriguez for second place on the career RBI list with a sixth-inning single Wednesday against the San Francisco Giants. It was his 2,086th RBI.

## Mets replace Matz with Lugo

MIAMI — Right-hander Seth Lugo, who leads the New York Mets with three saves, will move into their rotation starting Thursday against Miami to replace struggling lefty Steven Matz.

Matz, who is 0-4 with an ERA of 9.00, will move to the bullpen, and Edwin Diaz will become the closer.

Manager Luis Rojas decided to make the switch before Wednesday's game against Miami.

Seth has been a starter for us in the past," Rojas said. "He's a guy who is ready for any kind of challenge with his versatility."

Lugo was one of baseball's best, most durable relievers in 2019, compiling a 2.70 ERA while covering 80 innings over 41 appearances.

He's repeatedly expressed a preference for starting and had some success in the role in 2017. New York considered converting Lugo back to the rotation over the off-season but instead added free agents Rick Porcello and Michael Wacha.

The bullpen struggled without Lugo on Wednesday, allowing three runs to blow a lead before Michael Conforto hit a two-run homer in the ninth to give New York a 5-3 win.

Diaz walked in a run in the eighth but pitched a perfect ninth with three strikeouts for the victory. He has a 2.53 ERA and one save and said he embraces returning to the role of closer, where he struggled last year.

"I feel like I have been ready since spring training," the Puerto Rican said through a translator. "I'm ready to pitch in whatever situation they need me."

## Injury ends Alvarez's season

DENVER — Houston Astros designated hitter Yordan Alvarez, last season's AL Rookie of the Year, will miss the rest of the season because of a partially torn right patellar tendon that requires surgery, manager Dusty Baker said Wednesday.

Alvarez hit 27 homers in 313 at-bats last season but appeared in just two games this year. He missed Houston's summer camp and the first three weeks of the season while recovering from the coronavirus.

Alvarez made his season debut on Fri-

day and homered against the Seattle Mariners. He played again Saturday but was scratched from Sunday's lineup because of the knee injury and placed on the 10-day injured list Tuesday.

"We expect a full recovery," Baker said. "It's better that it happens now for spring training because he has between now and spring training to heal."

Taylor Jones was recalled from the Astros' alternate training site to take Alvarez's place on the roster.

## Ripken reveals cancer surgery

Baseball Hall of Famer Cal Ripken Jr., who turns 60 on Monday, revealed Thursday that he underwent surgery for prostate cancer in March and has made a full recovery.

"Everything couldn't have gone better in the surgery as far as the side effects and some of the things that could have happened afterward," Ripken said, via MASN, in a Zoom call with reporters ahead of next month's 25th anniversary of his breaking Lou Gehrig's record for consecutive games played. "None of those things happened. The nerves were preserved, everything looked good in surgery and it was very successful."

Ripken said a routine checkup early this year revealed he had slightly elevated levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) in his blood. As a precaution, Ripken made an appointment with a urologist, who performed a few tests and recommended a biopsy. In mid-February, early-stage prostate cancer was diagnosed.

## Pirates president has virus

Pittsburgh Pirates President Travis Williams has tested positive for COVID-19 and says he is "on the road to recovery." He says he knows of no other positive tests within the organization.

He said in a statement Thursday he began feeling symptoms Monday night.

"Fortunately, however, I followed the critical health and safety protocols that we have put in place, including wearing a mask as required, maintaining social distance," He adds that he has started isolating and is getting further tests.



JOHN MINICELLO/AP

Cincinnati Reds broadcaster Thom Brennaman used a gay slur during the broadcast of Cincinnati's game against the Kansas City Royals on Wednesday, moments after the Fox Sports Ohio broadcast returned from a commercial break before the seventh inning in the first game of a doubleheader. Brennaman did not seem to realize he was already on the air.

## Reds apologize, suspend broadcaster for gay slur

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Reds broadcaster Thom Brennaman has been suspended from working Cincinnati's games after using a gay slur on air Wednesday night, prompting the team to apologize for the "horrific, homophobic remark."

Brennaman used the slur moments after the Fox Sports Ohio feed returned from a commercial break before the top of the seventh inning in the first game of a doubleheader at Kansas City. Brennaman did not seem to realize he was already on air. He later apologized.

The Reds took the 56-year-old Brennaman off the broadcast in the fifth inning of the second game.

"The Cincinnati Reds organization is devastated by the horrific, homophobic remark made this evening by broadcaster Thom Brennaman," the team said in a statement. "He was pulled off the air, and effective immediately was suspended from doing Reds broadcasts. We will be addressing our broadcasting team in the coming days."

"In no way does this incident represent our players, coaches, organization, or our fans. We share our sincerest apologies to the LGBTQ+ community in Cincinnati, Kansas City, all across this country, and beyond. The Reds embrace a zero-tolerance policy for bias or discrimination of any kind, and we are truly sorry to anyone who has been offended," it said.

Brennaman opened the fifth inning with an apology spoken directly to camera before handing off play-by-play duties.

"I made a comment earlier tonight that I guess went out over the air that I am deeply ashamed of," he said. "If I have hurt anyone out there, I can't tell you how much I say from the bottom of my heart, I am very, very sorry."

After pausing to announce a home run by

Cincinnati's Nick Castellanos, Brennaman added: "I don't know if I'm going to be putting on this headset again" and apologized to the Reds, Fox Sports and his coworkers.

Reds reliever Amir Garrett tweeted about Brennaman's words shortly after the end of the second game:

"To the LGBTQ community just know I am with you, and whoever is against you, is against me," he wrote.

"I'm sorry for what was said today."

"LGBTQ+ community, as a member of the Reds organization, I am so sorry for the way you were marginalized tonight," injured Reds reliever Matt Bowman said on Twitter. "There will always be a place for you in the baseball community and we are so happy to have you here."

Brennaman and the Reds announcers were working from Great American Ball Park in Cincinnati, even though the doubleheader against the Royals was in Kansas City. Remote broadcasts have become the norm in the baseball this year because of coronavirus protocols.

The son of Hall of Fame broadcaster Marty Brennaman, Thom has called major league games for 33 years and has been with Fox Sports for the past 27.

"I can't begin to tell you how deeply sorry I am," Brennaman said. "That is not who I am and never has been. I like to think maybe I could have some people who can back that up. I am very, very sorry and I beg for your forgiveness."

Broadcast partner Chris Welsh told Brennaman "You're a good man, partner. Hang in there."

**'I can't begin to tell you how deeply sorry I am.'**

**Thom Brennaman**  
Reds announcer

## NFL

# Requesting an encore season

Repeating career years presents the next challenge for some NFL players

By TERESA M. WALKER  
Associated Press

**T**he Tennessee Titans are confident enough Ryan Tannehill can repeat the best season of his career, or close enough, that they gave him a four-year, \$118 million contract.

The rest of the NFL needs to see Tannehill do it again to believe he really is the quarterback who led the league in passer rating.

Tannehill has heard he has his doubters.

"My process doesn't change," Tannehill said. "How I go about getting ready for a season, getting ready for a football game, how I work in practice and prepare, that process doesn't change. So, I'm doing everything I can to play the best football I can and whatever happens after that happens."

Tannehill has plenty of company among NFL players trying to prove a career season wasn't a one-hit wonder but a preview of coming attractions.

He posted a 117.5 passer rating, averaged 9.6 yards per pass and ranked third in the NFL by completing 70.3% of his passes. The Titans went 9-4 and reached their first AFC championship game in 17 years after Tannehill took over as the starter. He also was voted the AP NFL Comeback Player of the Year.

His play in Miami actually indicates Tannehill might be able to follow up his amazing season. Tannehill had a passer rating of 92.7 or higher in three seasons with the Dolphins, and he had three seasons completing at least 64.2% of his passes. When

## By the numbers

# 117.5

Passer rating last season for Ryan Tannehill with the Tennessee Titans, a career best, including a rating of 124.6 in December.

# 5,109

Passing yards last season for then-Tampa Bay quarterback Jameis Winston, tops in the NFL, but with a league-leading 30 interceptions.

# 19½

Sacks last season for Tampa Bay linebacker Shaq Barrett, tops in the NFL.

SOURCE: Associated Press

Miami traded him to Tennessee in March. Tannehill joined a franchise that had gone 9-7 the previous three seasons.

He only got more comfortable with the Titans' offense as



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Tennessee Titans quarterback Ryan Tannehill had a 117.5 passer rating, averaged 9.6 yards per pass and ranked third in the NFL by completing 70.3% of his passes last season.

the season progressed. He had a 124.6 passer rating in December, when he threw 12 touchdowns and only two interceptions — best in the AFC.

Being with the Titans gives Tannehill a chance to replicate his success. Derrick Henry is back after leading the NFL in rushing behind an offensive line that returns four of five starters, and the right tackle is the only offensive starter who must be replaced.

And Henry is another player who faces the challenge of proving he didn't have just one great year with his 1,540 yards rushing.

The first-time Pro Bowl back carried 303 times, followed by another 83 carries in the playoffs for the kind of load that can take a toll. Henry spent his offseason training to become stronger and better, and he even found a steep hill in Dallas to test himself.

Henry has simple goals for his follow-up.

"Continue to try to elevate my game each time I step on the field ...," Henry said. "That will always be my focus."

## Jameis Winston

Perhaps an odd choice given that he lost his job with the Buccaneers. But the quarterback led the NFL with 5,109 yards passing last season for Tampa Bay. Now he's in New Orleans backing up Drew Brees, and the only way he can lead the league again in 2020 would be if Brees gets hurt and misses most of the season. On the plus side, that also should keep Winston from leading the league again in interceptions after having 30 last season.

Brees' backup in 2019, Teddy Bridgewater, won all five of his starts, so the personnel is on hand should Winston need to step in.

## Raheem Mostert

The running back who turned in an NFC championship game performance for the ages capital-



DAVID GRUNFELD, THE (BATON ROUGE, LA.) ADVOCATE/AP

New Orleans Saints quarterback Jameis Winston lost his job last season in Tampa Bay after throwing for 5,109 yards and 30 interceptions, both tops in the NFL.

ized on his play with a new contract. Now Mostert, who ran for only 303 yards in his first four seasons combined with five different teams — he mostly was a special teamer — must show he's the guy who ran for 220 yards and four TDs in the 49ers' win over Green Bay.

Mostert averaged 6.34 yards per carry in the playoffs, an increase from the 5.64 yards he averaged over 16 games during the regular season. But he's had only one 100-yard rushing game in his career to go with his NFC championship production.

## Shaq Barrett

The Tampa Bay linebacker has to prove he's not a one-year phenomenon after leading the NFL with 19½ sacks. Barrett never had more than 5½ sacks in a single season before, making the way he took down quarterbacks so surprising in 2019.

Barrett might benefit from simply being a full-time starter

after making only 15 starts combined in his previous five seasons in Denver. The Bucs sure didn't want to risk losing Barrett, using the franchise tag to keep him around.

## Minkah Fitzpatrick

The safety made an impressive debut with Pittsburgh with a career-high five interceptions after Miami traded him away after Week 2 last season. The Dolphins used the No. 11 draft pick overall on Fitzpatrick out of Alabama, and he had two picks as a rookie.

## Anthony Harris

The safety went without an interception through his first three seasons with Minnesota, but Harris did pick off three passes in 2018 before he had a career season with six interceptions in 2019. It helped that he started 14 games, the most of any season in his career. The Vikings bet merely a franchise tag that Harris can do that again.



PHILAN M. EBERNACK/AP

Tampa Bay Buccaneers linebacker Shaq Barrett forces a fumble on a sack of Jacksonville Jaguars quarterback Nick Foles during a game in Jacksonville last season. He is out to prove he's not a one-year wonder after leading the NFL with 19½ sacks.



## NFL

Steelers WR 'lit'...  
but for how long?By WILL GRAVES  
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The answer was decidedly on brand.

Asked on Monday what he brings to the Pittsburgh Steelers' wide receiver room as the longest-tenured member of the group despite still being just 23, JuJu Smith-Schuster sounded very much like the kid he still is.

"I am definitely the guy that is trying to make everyone laugh and enjoy their job," Smith-Schuster said. "Making the best out of it. I think there are days where we are tired or we are down and feel like we just don't want to do it, but I am the guy that comes in and says, 'Let's go, man. Let's have fun today, make the most out of it.' Like I said, we are always lit."

The underlying question heading into 2020, however, is for how much longer will it stay lit, at least in Pittsburgh? Smith-Schuster isn't sure.

For all of his popularity, production and self-confidence — a troika that's made his No. 19 jersey one of the team's best sellers since he splashed onto the scene in 2017 still too young (20) to legally buy alcohol — Smith-Schuster has been in the NFL long enough to understand how the business side works.

He's been good. At times really good. He's also entering the final year of his rookie deal. The Steelers historically do not negotiate contract extensions once the regular season starts. The clock is ticking to get something done. Smith-Schuster insists he won't let his long-term status affect his short-term goals.

"Contract-wise, that is between my agent and the Steelers," he said. "At the end of the day ... I am just here to play ball. I am not going to be the type of guy that sits out and waits. I am going to play regardless if there is a contract or not."



PETER DIANA, PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE/AP

Steelers wide receiver JuJu Smith-Schuster goes through a drill during practice Monday at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh.

There's plenty to play for following the first significant speed bump of his football life. The de facto No. 1 receiver after the team dealt Antonio Brown to Oakland in March 2019, Smith-Schuster's third season in the league was a myriad of setbacks and inconsistency.

Quarterback Ben Roethlisberger went down with a right elbow injury at halftime of Week 2 and never returned. Backups Mason Rudolph and Devlin Hodges struggled to generate any momentum offensively. Defenses focused on shutting down Smith-Schuster after he hauled in 111 passes while making the Pro

Bowl in 2018. A concussion and a knee injury during an ugly loss to Cleveland forced him to miss a month. He finished with just 42 receptions and had just 109 yards receiving over his final five starts.

"One thing with me, I never had experienced injuries where I've been out for multiple weeks for that long," Smith-Schuster said. "That was something I knew I had to learn as a young guy, and also being the No. 1 receiver for a team. It was just more so making sure that if I wasn't

playing, making sure that everybody else was a part of doing their thing, making sure that we get in and out of games."

Which puts Smith-Schuster in a bit of a weird spot. The Steelers used their first pick in the 2020 draft to take 6-foot-4 Notre Dame wide receiver Chase Claypool with the 49th overall selection. Smith-Schuster called Claypool's athleticism "amazing."

Life comes at you fast in the NFL, where Smith-Schuster suddenly finds himself facing a "prove it" season before his 24th birthday.

"I want everybody to be successful," Smith-Schuster said. "If I make them better, it makes me work harder to keep my job. We just want to win games."



RICK OSENTOSKI/AP

Running back Frank Gore rushed for a career-low 599 yards last season in his lone season in Buffalo.

# No end in sight

## Ageless Gore embarking on 16th season

By DENNIS WASZAK JR.  
Associated Press

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. — A running joke around the NFL is that Frank Gore will play football forever.

Or, at least until he's 60. If he feels it's time to stop then.

The 37-year-old Gore is a rarity in a brutally physical business that often forces players 10 years younger than he is — or more — to find a new profession. Instead, he's back for his 16th season in the pros and first with the New York Jets, and approaches training camp with the passion and enthusiasm of a rookie.

"It's just the love of the game," Gore said during a video call Monday after practice. "And also the stuff I've been through even just to get to this point in the league. It wasn't easy to get here."

Gore is the third-leading rusher in NFL history, but there was a time — and it feels like forever ago — when playing at all at this level was no certainty. As a sophomore at the University of Miami in 2002, Gore tore the anterior cruciate ligament and meniscus in his right knee during a spring practice. He bounced back from that only to tear the ACL in his left knee in a game against West Virginia the following year.

He returned to have a solid season in 2004, but injury concerns



ADRIAN KRAUS/AP

At 37 years old, Gore sits third on the all-time rushing list with 15,347 yards.

caused him to slip until the third round of the 2005 draft. Gore had the skills for stardom, but his surgically repaired knees didn't bode well for a lengthy career as a running back.

"Both of my knees were torn, I get written off," Gore recalled. "God blessed me to get the opportunity to do something I love. And when I got that opportunity, I took advantage of it."

And, remarkably, he has stayed

mostly healthy since, other than a hip fracture in 2010.

When he was held out of the Jets' first full practice of camp last Friday as a precaution to rest a hamstring issue, Gore couldn't stand the wait.

"He didn't want to hear any of that," coach Adam Gase said with a smile. "He wants to be on the field. He wants to get reps. He wants to contribute. He wants to go out there and compete against those guys."

Talk to any coach or player who has worked with him, from his 10 seasons in San Francisco to his three-year stint in Indianapolis and his one-year stops in Miami and Buffalo, and they all echo the Jets coach's description of the ageless Gore.

"You can see why the guy's still playing," said Gase, who previously coached him in both San Francisco and Miami. "He runs out there on the first day like it's the first time he played a practice in the NFL. You can tell that's why he still plays, he still loves it. He still loves the first practice. He's excited about it, he's nervous about it."

"I mean, it's pretty cool to see a guy that's a future Hall of Famer that still gets like that."

Gore has rushed for 15,347 career yards, just 1,379 behind Walter Payton on the all-time list. That number might seem out of reach. But, there's no telling when Gore will stop playing.

## NBA

## Roundup

# Donic, Mavericks down Clippers, tie series at 1

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Luka Donic has his first NBA postseason victory, though probably not the way he expected.

Instead of leading the Dallas Mavericks on the court, he was helping lead cheers from the sideline as his teammates pulled away while he sat.

Donic scored 28 points and the Mavericks put together the pivotal run when he was out to beat the Los Angeles Clippers 127-114 on Wednesday night and even the Western Conference playoff series at a game apiece.

"This is how we're going to have to win games," Mavs coach Rick Carlisle said. "Our depth is going to be a big part of it."

Two nights after scoring 42 points in the highest-scoring debut in postseason history, Donic played just nine minutes in the second half because of foul trouble. He finished with eight rebounds and seven assists.

The 21-year-old picked up his fourth foul less than a minute into the third quarter, shaking his finger toward the Dallas bench that he didn't want to come out.

He stayed on then and, when he did come out toward the end of the period, Dallas put together a strong stretch of basketball. A finishing 14-4 spurt made it 98-85 entering the fourth.

And even after Donic picked up his fifth less than a minute into the final period and had to go out again, the Mavs pushed the lead to 18 in the final 12 minutes.

Donic said when he returned to the bench he was frustrated for about 15 seconds, then turned his attention to supporting his teammates.

"Being on the bench, it's hard for me. I want to help my team but we won the game," Donic said.

Kristaps Porzingis added 23 points for the Mavericks. They beat the Clippers for the first time in five meetings this season and earned their first playoff victory since 2016.

Kawhi Leonard had 35 points and 10 rebounds, but Paul George had a mostly miserable performance for the second-seeded Clippers. They played without starting guard Patrick Beverley because of a calf injury.

"We expect a tough matchup, we expect a tough challenge, but this is good thing about it is we're up for the challenge," George said.

With the top-seeded Lakers and Bucks looking sluggish in the bubble even before they both lost their playoff openers to No. 8 seeds, some betting sites had begun listing the Clippers as the title favorites.

They certainly look the part, having added Leonard and



KIM KLEMENT, POOL PHOTO/AP

Dallas Mavericks guard Luka Donic shoots from the lane Wednesday against the Los Angeles Clippers during Game 2 of their first-round playoff series in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

George in the summer and then some veteran pieces including the season.

**Celtics 128, 76ers 101:** Jayson Tatum scored 33 points and Boston beat Philadelphia to take a 2-0 series lead.

Tatum scored a career playoff high for the second straight game after scoring 32 points in the opener. Monday, Kemba Walker added 22 points and Jaylen Brown had 20 for the Celtics. Boston shot 51% from the field and committed just seven turnovers, including two in the first three quarters.

Joel Embiid had 34 points and 10 rebounds for the 76ers, and Josh Richardson added 15.

**Jazz 124, Nuggets 105:** Donovan Mitchell scored 21 of his 30 points in a big third quarter and Utah beat Denver to even the series at a game apiece.

Mitchell was 10-for-14 from the floor. He helped the Jazz break open the game in the third quarter and increase the lead to 31 in the fourth.

His performance was on the heels of scoring a Jazz playoff-record 57 points in a 135-125 overtime loss in Game 1. Mitchell was the focus of Denver's defense, which helped open up other avenues for teammates.

Jordan Clarkson scored a personal playoff-best 26 points on a day the Jazz shot 51.7% from the floor. They also had 32 assists and hit 20 three-pointers.

Nuggets rookie Michael Porter Jr. had 28 points, and Nikola Jokic added 28 points and 11 rebounds.

**Raptors 104, Nets 99:** Fred VanVleet had 24 points and 10 assists, Norman Powell had a big game off the bench with 24 points and defending NBA champion Toronto beat Brooklyn to take a 2-0 series lead.

Kyle Lowry had 21 points, nine rebounds and forced a big turnover in the closing seconds for the second-seeded Raptors. Garrett Temple led the Nets with 16 points, and Caris LeVert had 16 points and 11 rebounds.

## Scoreboard

## Playoffs

## At Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

## FIRST ROUND

## Best-of-seven, 7-0 necessary

## EASTERN CONFERENCE

## Orlando 1, Milwaukee 0

## Orlando 12, Milwaukee 110

## Thursday Game 1

## Saturday Game 3 (AFN Sports, 7 p.m.)

## Saturday CET: 2 a.m. Sunday JKT

## Sunday Game 4

## x-Wednesday, Aug. 25: Game 5

## x-Thursday, Aug. 26: Game 6

## x-Friday, Aug. 28: Game 7

## x-Sunday, Aug. 30: Game 7

## Toronto 2, Brooklyn 0

## Toronto 124, Brooklyn 110

## Wednesday: Toronto 104, Brooklyn 99

## Friday Game 3 (AFN Sports, 7:30 p.m.)

## Friday CET: 2:30 a.m. Saturday JKT

## Saturday Game 4

## x-Tuesday, Aug. 25: Game 5

## x-Thursday, Aug. 27: Game 6

## x-Saturday, Aug. 29: Game 7

## Boston 2, Philadelphia 0

## Boston 109, Philadelphia 101

## Wednesday: Boston 128, Philadelphia 104

## Friday Game 3 (AFN Sports, 12:30 a.m.)

## Saturday CET: 1:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

## Sunday Game 4

## x-Tuesday, Aug. 25: Game 5

## x-Thursday, Aug. 27: Game 6

## x-Saturday, Aug. 29: Game 7

## Miami 1, Indiana 0

## Miami 113, Indiana 101

## Thursday Game 2

## Saturday Game 3 (AFN Sports, 9:30 p.m.)

## Saturday CET: 4:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

## Monday Game 4

## x-Wednesday, Aug. 26: Game 5

## x-Thursday, Aug. 28: Game 6

## x-Sunday, Aug. 30: Game 7

## WESTERN CONFERENCE

## Portland 1, L.A. Lakers 0

## Portland 100, L.A. Lakers 93

## Thursday Game 2

## Saturday Game 3 (AFN Sports, 2:30 a.m.)

## Saturday CET: 9:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

## Monday Game 4

## x-Wednesday, Aug. 26: Game 5

## x-Friday, Aug. 28: Game 6

## x-Saturday, Aug. 29: Game 7

## L.A. Clippers 1, Dallas 1

## L.A. Clippers 118, Dallas 110

## Wednesday: Dallas 127, L.A. Clippers 114

## Friday Game 3 (AFN Sports, 10 a.m.)

## Saturday CET: 10 a.m. Saturday JKT

## Sunday Game 4

## Tuesday, Aug. 25: Game 5

## x-Thursday, Aug. 27: Game 6

## x-Saturday, Aug. 29: Game 7

## Denver 1, Utah 1

## Denver 135, Utah 125, OT

## Wednesday: Utah 124, Denver 105

## Friday Game 3 (AFN Sports, 10 p.m.)

## Friday CET: 5 a.m. Saturday JKT

## Sunday Game 4

## Tuesday, Aug. 25: Game 5

## x-Thursday, Aug. 27: Game 6

## x-Saturday, Aug. 29: Game 7

## Houston 1, Oklahoma City 0

## Houston 123, Oklahoma City 108

## Thursday Game 2

## Saturday Game 3 (AFN Sports, mid-night Saturday CET: 7 a.m. Sunday JKT)

## Monday Game 4

## x-Wednesday, Aug. 26: Game 5

## x-Friday, Aug. 28: Game 6

## x-Sunday, Aug. 30: Game 7

## Wednesday

## Raptors 104, Nets 99

## Brooklyn 99, Nets 104

## Luvu-Cabot 6-16 2-2 17, Allen 5-9 4-6

## 14, LeVert 5-22 6-9 16, Temple 6-15 4-4

## 21, Kurucs 1-4 0-0 2, Chiozza 1-2 1-2 3,

## TJohnson 5-10 0-0 12. Totals 38-57 19-27

## 99.

## TORONTO — Anunoby 9-22 5-4 4, Siakam

## 6-14 9-19, Gass 0-0 0-0 3, Foulkes 7-14 4-6

## 21, VanVleet 8-22 5-5 24, Hollis-Felfel 10-0

## 0-0 0-0, Ibaka 3-9 2-2 8, M.Thomas 11-22

## 2-2, Powell 11-17 1-2 24. Totals 38-57 19-

## 28, 104.

## Toronto 33 20 27 19-99

## Toronto 33 20 24 30-104

Three-Point Goals—Brooklyn 14-41 (Temple 5-11, Harris 4, Luvu-Cabot 3-10, Johnson 2-5, Kurucs 0-3, LeVert 0-4), Toronto 9-35 (Lowry 3-6, VanVleet 1-11, Siakam 2-4, Foulkes 1-1, Anunoby 0-3, Ibaka 0-4). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Brooklyn 46 (Allen 10, Harris 9, Toronto 44 (Lowry 9), Assist—Brooklyn 25 (LeVert 11), Toronto 22 (VanVleet 10). Total Fouls—Brooklyn 25, Toronto 21.

## Jazz 124, Nuggets 105

Utah 124, Denver 105. O'Neal 3-4 0-0 9, Gobert 7-10 5-8 19, Imps 1-2 0-0 18, Mitchell 10-14 4-4 30, Bradley 1-2 1-13, Brantley 3-0 0-0 6, Nang 3-10 0-0 7, Tucker 0-0 0-0 6, Clarkson 9-18 4-4 26, Mudry 2-7 0-0 5, 1-3 0-0 2, Williams-Goss 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 45-87 14-17 124.

DENVER — Millsap 2-5 1-1 5, Porter Jr. 10-17 2-3 26, Jokic 10-21 7-10 26, Craigh 0-0 0, Murray 6-13 1-14, Bates-Diaw 0-0 0-0 6, Bol 0-0 2-2 2, Cook 0-0 0-0 0, Dozier 1-3 3-4 5, Grant 3-8 0-0 8, Plumlee 0-3 0-0 0, Daniels 2-3 0-0 1, Morris 3-6 2-2 10, Totals 37-81 18-23 105.

## Utah 27 34 43 20-124

## Denver 27 23 29 20-105

Three-Point Goals—Utah 20-44 (Mitchell 6-7, Clarkson 4-9, Imps 4-9, O'Neal 3-4, Mudry 1-2, Morgan 1-3, Nang 1-6, Brantley 0-2, Otis 0-2), Denver 13-27 (Porter Jr. 6-9, Morris 3-7, Grant 1-2, Murray 1-2). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Utah 36 (Bradley, Gobert, O'Neal 7), Denver (Jokic 11). Assist—Utah 32 (Mitchell, O'Neal 8), Denver 22 (Jokic 6). Total Fouls—Utah 18, Denver 19.

## Celtics 128, 76ers 101

Philadelphia 128, Harris 4-15 5-13, Thibault 1-2 0-0 2, Embiid 11-21 12-13 34, Milton 5-8 2-14, Richardson 6-12 4-4 18, Horford 2-3 0-0 4, Kormaz 0-3 3-3 3, O'Quinn 0-0 0-0 0, Scott 1-4 4-6 6, Pele 0-0 0-0 0, Burks 1-8 0-0 2, Neto 5-0-0-5. Totals 38-80 30-101.

BOSTON — Brown 6-13 6-6 20, Tatum 12-20 1-2 33, Theis 1-5 0-2 0, Smart 3-11 3-3 10, Walker 9-16 5-22, Green 1-2 0-0 3, Langford 2-4 1-2 6, Ojeleye 1-1 0-0 3, Williams 2-2 3-4 5, Williams III 0-0 0, Fall 1-1 1-2 3, Kanter 4-7 1-6 10, Wanamaker 3-3 0-0 7, Totals 48-81 21-29 128.

## Philadelphia 33 24 18 26-101

## Boston 27 38 33 30-128

Three-Point Goals—Philadelphia 5-21 (Richardson 2-3, Milton 2-5, Neto 1-2, Burks 0-2, Embiid 0-2, Harris 0-2, Kormaz 0-3), Boston 19-43 (Tatum 6-12, Williams 2-2, Brown 2-7, Green 1-2, Walker 1-6, Smart 1-7, Theis 0-2). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Philadelphia 39 (Harris 11), Boston 43 (Kanter 9). Assist—Philadelphia 21 (Milton 4), Boston 20 (Tatum 5). Total Fouls—Philadelphia 21, Boston 28.

## Mavericks 127, Clippers 114

DALLAS — Hardaway Jr. 5-13 4-6 17, Porzingis 7-13 6-8 23, Kleber 2-6 0-0 4, Donic 8-17 12-28, Finney-Smith 3-9 0-0 8, Kidd-Gilchrist 0-1 0-0 0, Marjanovic 6-8 1-1 13, Burke 7-11 2-4 16, Curry 6-9 2-2 15, Wright 0-2 3-3 3. Totals 44-88 36-127.

L.A. CLIPPERS — Leonard 10-21 13-14 35, Morris Sr. 5-11 3-4 24, Zubac 1-2 1-3, George 4-17 4-4 14, Richardson 4-9 0-0 11, Manu 0-0 0-0 0, Green 1-5 0-2, Harrell 3-4 1-10 10, Noah 0-0 0-0 0, McGrudder 0-0 0-0 0, Sharnett 1-2 0-0 2, Williams 8-13 5-6 23. Totals 37-84 30-117.

## Dallas 29 32 37 29-127

## Clippers 29 29 37 29-114

Three-Point Goals—Dallas 13-29 (Donic 4-7, Porzingis 3-4, Hardaway Jr. 3-7, Morris Sr. 3-4, Green 0-0 0-0 0, Marjanovic 1-4). Clippers 10-34 (Rajackson 3-5, Williams 2-5, Leonard 2-6, George 2-10, Morris Sr. 1-4, Green 0-3). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Dallas 49 (Kleber 10), L.A. Clippers 47 (George, Finney-Smith 10). Assist—Dallas 25 (Donic 7), L.A. Clippers 29 (1 Milton 4). Total Fouls—Dallas 29, L.A. Clippers 29.



KEVIN C. COX, POOL PHOTO/AP

The Boston Celtics' Jayson Tatum celebrates a three-point shot against the Philadelphia 76ers during the second half of Game 2 of their first-round playoff series Wednesday in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

# AUTO RACING



AP photo

From left to right, in this May 24, 1969 file photo, Al Unser, Mario Andretti and A.J. Foyt pose for photos in Indianapolis. Six days later, Andretti went on to win his first — and to date, the Andretti family's only — Indianapolis 500.

## Family: Indy 500 pole a defining moment for Marco

### FROM BACK PAGE

Andretti had done just that, seizing the first Indianapolis 500 pole in 33 years for motorsports' most famous family by bumping five-time series champion Scott Dixon on the final run of the day.

It was a glorious moment and a nail-biting test of Andretti's ability to close the deal. His car was consistently the best in buildup to qualifying, but Andretti needed to summon the nerve to push his car to its very limit Sunday. At stake was the first Andretti pole since his grandfather Marco won his last in 1987, when Marco was just two months old.

He's still got to actually win the race. But earning the right to lead the field to green in "The Greatest Spectacle in Racing" is a résumé highlight all by itself — and for Andretti, it is a defining moment. He is under constant scrutiny for his failure to find success — in the IndyCar Series and, even worse, at the speedway itself.

This is the only race that really matters to the Andretti family and the organization is loaded this year. Four Andretti cars made the fast nine shootout Sunday and they were the clear contenders to win the pole. One by one, they failed to replicate the speed the team knows is there in the cars and then suddenly there was Dixon atop the leaderboard.

Andretti was the final driver on the track. It was hot and a slight wind swirled around the empty speedway, conditions that should have slowed his effort.

With a confidence he has struggled to show in recent years, Andretti ripped four laps around the 2.5-mile oval — wide-open on the gas, fast and fearless in pursuit of his own moment of glory at Indy.

"On the last lap, I knew it was either all or nothing," Andretti told The Associated Press on Monday at the speedway in the shadow of its Pagoda. "I was either not going to finish or the run was going to be very good. I had to dig deep for that, reach for the next level."

**“He’s such a great guy and a good friend...To see him get a pole position at Indianapolis — I know what that means to him and especially his family.”**

**Scott Dixon**

IndyCar driver, on Marco Andretti

His run was wildly celebrated by his fellow competitors; even Dixon said he was rooting for Andretti.

"He's such a great guy and a good friend," Dixon said. "To see him get a pole position at Indianapolis — I know what that means to him and especially his family."

The speedway is the Andretti family playground. Mario Andretti won the Indy 500 only once, in 1969, and five Andrettis are a combined 1-for-74 when it comes to winning the most famous race on the IndyCar calendar, leading to the notorious "Andretti Curse" label.

"We don't believe in it as a family," he told AP. "We've been really blessed around here and we are unscathed as far as being in race cars. This is a dangerous thing we do and we are all healthy. It's hard to say we're cursed. This place can bury your confidence and it can also make you."

Now 33, Marco has been at Indy his whole life and his favorite memories, he said, were days spent at the old Speedway Motel turning laps on the balcony on a toy car as his grandfather, father, uncle and cousin fine-tuned their race cars.

He wants nothing more than to break that so-called curse, which began for him as a rookie in 2006 when Sam Hornish Jr. passed him right before the finish line. Marco finished second, his father, Michael finished third and it was the first of 14 consecutive years of Indy 500 heartbreak for Marco.

He said the race that hurts the most was actually last year when he ran a tribute 50th anniversary paint scheme of his grandfather's win, a time-consuming effort that his sister tirelessly put together.

Racial changes made to his car were a disaster and he finished 26th, his worst finish in 10 years.

"It was totally embarrassing," Andretti said. "It's one of those times where I just wanted to crawl under a rock."

Andretti recognizes that his statistics — two wins in 240 starts over 15 seasons, his last victory way back in 2011 — open him to criticism. Fans have accused him of keeping his job only because his dad owns the team and suggested he's not worthy of his seat.

It used to bother him. But Andretti has grown up in this series; he was just 19 his rookie year and teammates with series greats Dario Franchitti, Tony Kanaan and Herta, who now calls his races. He has settled into the Pennsylvania home where he grew up, next door to his beloved grandfather. He's content being Marco Andretti and has stopped worrying about the chatter.

Being a favorite to win the race that means everything to his family is an enormous amount of pressure. But that can wait for now. He was the toast of the town Sunday — his family always is when the race is in Indy — and the moment, for once, was all his.

To clear his head, he planned to go a family cabin in the Pocono mountains before he returns to the track Friday. He'll pick up "Nonno," his 80-year-old grandfather, on the way back.

"It's just about being chill and trying to not stress," Andretti said. "I can do that there because it's an all-wood log cabin and you get there and it's like everything's cool, everything is going to be alright."

## NASCAR driver Larson on slur: 'just ignorant'

**By JENNA FRYER**  
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — What do you do when the entire world believes you are a racist? When your career has collapsed because you uttered the N-word while playing a late night video game?

Kyle Larson packed his things and left North Carolina, returning to his native California too embarrassed to show his face in public.

The facts were plain and he doesn't deny them: He was iRacing in April, couldn't hear his spotter on his headset and used the racist slur to get his "colleagues' attention. His downfall was swift: The 28-year-old Larson lost his sponsors, his job and any shot at a multimillion-dollar contract in NASCAR's upcoming free agency.

Depressed and devastated, Larson began a journey to understand both why he had said the word and how to grow from the experience. What he discovered was that he'd been living in a bubble most of his life in which winning races was the only thing that mattered.

"I was just ignorant. And immature. I didn't understand the negativity and hurt that comes with that word," Larson told The Associated Press. "That's not a word that I had ever used. I grew up in Northern California, all I ever did was race and that's all I was focused on."

Larson sat down with the AP on Wednesday for his first interview since he was fired April 15 by Chip Ganassi Racing after every sponsor cut ties. He had also been suspended by NASCAR and needed to complete a sensitivity training course for reinstatement.

Larson took the course. Then he decided he needed to do more. He connected with retired soccer star Tony Sanneh, whose foundation works on youth development and empowerment in the Minneapolis area. Larson went to visit Sanneh and volunteer at the foundation in the weeks before the race — and the nation — were rocked by the death of George Floyd in police custody.

Floyd died a few weeks after that first visit and Larson again returned to Minneapolis. Sanneh took him to the site where Floyd died and they toured parts of the city heavily damaged in protests over racial injustice.

This was new ground for Larson. His family — father Mike and mother Janet, both devout in raising their son to make proper life decisions, be a good person and treat people equally — was made racing a hobby. When Larson began karting at 7, they used all discretionary income on furthering his racing career.

"I never really realized how privileged I was in the way I grew up," Larson said. "I never had to really worry about anything and I guess I was naïve. I didn't have a full understanding of what there are people struggling with differ-



COLIN E. BRALEY/AP

**28-year-old Kyle Larson has been working behind the scenes to educate himself on racial issues since his firing from NASCAR for using a slur during an iRacing livestream in April.**

ent things on a daily basis. It was very impactful, very moving."

Sanneh connected Larson with former Olympian Jackie Joyner-Kersey and Larson visited her foundation in East St. Louis. He got on the phone with Max Siegel, the CEO of USA Track & Field who also runs a NASCAR-sanctioned team that is part of the stock car series' diversity program. Larson, who is half Japanese, came through that very program on his way to NASCAR.

Larson also continued work with the Urban Youth Racing School in Philadelphia. The nonprofit helps minorities advance in motorsports and Jysir Fisher, one of its students, had celebrated with Larson in victory lane after a win in Delaware last October.

Fisher was deeply disappointed by Larson's use of the N-word and discussed it with founder Anthony Martin. The two also talked when Larson said he wanted to visit the school.

"Kyle made it his business to come here to this school and apologize. He didn't want to do it by telephone. He wanted to do it face-to-face," Martin told AP. "That had a strong effect on Jysir. His favorite driver is still Kyle Larson."

Martin understands celebrities often go through the motions to repair their image after a fall. He insists that's not what Larson has been doing.

"Kids make mistake," Martin said. "Do I think that Kyle was ever a racist? Absolutely not."

Larson still hopes to get back to NASCAR. He doesn't know if a team or sponsors will be willing to give him a second chance. He has met NASCAR's requirements for reinstatement. He said Wednesday he has not yet requested reinstatement.

"I made a mistake and I'm paying for it and I accept that," Larson said. "All I can do is continue to improve myself and let my actions show who I truly am."



## SPORTS



## Making the best of it

Steelers WR Smith-Schuster focusing on production, not paycheck » **NFL, Page 53**



IN THE PITS

# All or nothing

Andretti digging deep to honor family at Indy 500

By JENNA FRYER  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

## INDIANAPOLIS

**F**RESH OFF ONE OF THE BIGGEST MOMENTS OF HIS CAREER, MARCO ANDRETTI HEADED TO ST. ELMO'S STEAKHOUSE FOR A MODEST CELEBRATION.

BRYAN HERTA, THE CONSIGUERE IN HIS EARS ON RACE DAYS, SAT ON HIS RIGHT. MARTA, HIS WIFE OF NEARLY THREE YEARS, WAS ON HIS LEFT. ANDRETTI WAS QUIET, AS HE GENERALLY IS IN PUBLIC, SOAKING UP HIS TIME IN THE SPOTLIGHT. IT'S

never been his turn. He is always at someone else's party.

This one was clearly for him. Another diner at the Indianapolis landmark said, "Go get 'em Marco" as he passed by the table. Sage Karam, like Andretti a Pennsylvania-raised racer, led guests as they raised a glass to Andretti for "laying down a fat one." That's what the late Dan Wheldon said, according to Andretti, to describe a huge lap around Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

SEE FAMILY ON PAGE 55

## FAMILY CURSE?

Mario Andretti won the Indy 500 just once, in 1969, and five Andrettis are a combined 1-for-74 at Indianapolis — thus the notorious "Andretti Curse." Grandson Marco, right, finished second as a rookie in 2006, but has just two career wins since.

SOURCE: Associated Press



Marco Andretti, 33, wants nothing more than to break the so-called "Andretti Curse." He first experienced it as a rookie in 2006 when Sam Hornish Jr. passed him right before the finish line. Marco finished second, with his father Michael third, in the first of 14 consecutive years of Indy 500 heartbreak for this year's pole-sitter.

Darron Cummings / AP

Beating up dad was just start for Porter » **Boxing, Page 49**

